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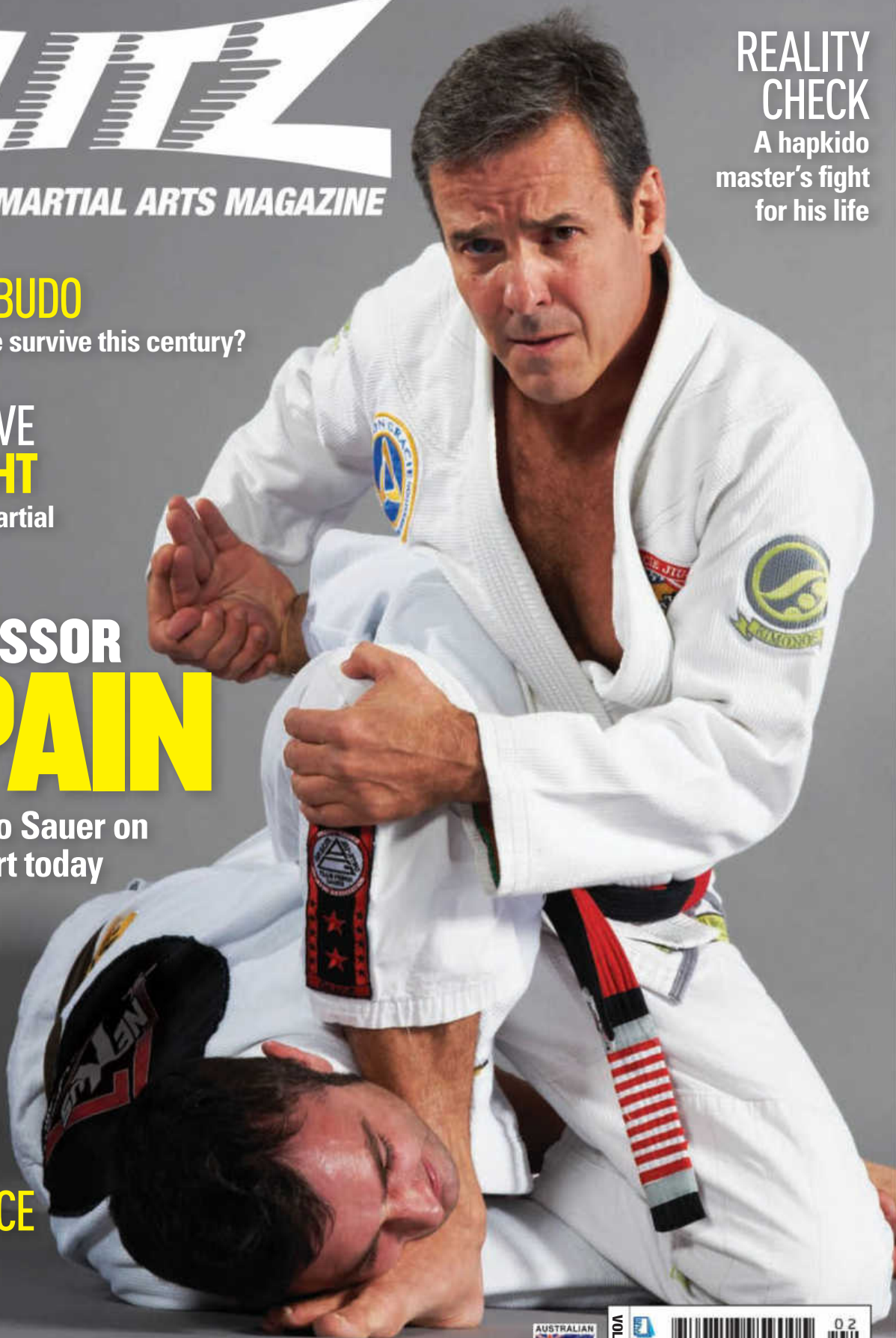
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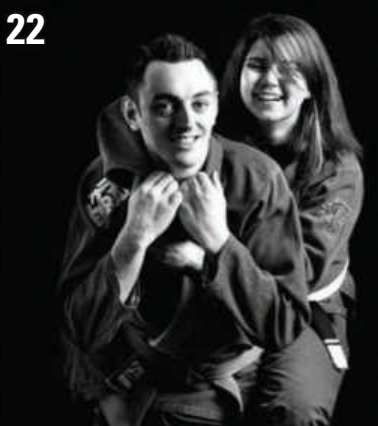
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EDITORIAL WITH SILVIO MORELLI



He'll Be Back!

As this issue of *Blitz* hits the shelves, we are just about six weeks away from the return of the **Arnold Classic Australia Martial Arts Festival**, which again promises to be the year's biggest opportunity to promote Australian martial arts.

As was the case at last year's inaugural Arnold Classic Australia, several of Australia's largest martial arts peak bodies will be enticing some of their top competitors to get among the action in what will be — across the board — a series of tournaments characterised by goodwill and an openness to sharing the arts. And if last year's event was anything to go by, friendly but fierce competition will be the order of the days (those days being 18–20 March).

At the 2015 event, it was certainly a satisfying feeling to see a multitude of clubs and organisations as well as a variety of vastly different fighting styles and sports on display. I feel that this will again be the event's strength this year: its ability to bring together athletes, coaches and clubs from right across the martial arts spectrum as well as all corners of Australia.

Beyond that, it is also an event that has huge potential to attract interest in the martial arts and combat sports as a whole. With thousands of fitness-focused folk passing through the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre during the Arnold Classic expo while the martial arts events are in motion, the opportunity to inspire new devotees is significant.

Not only will there be open competitions in several of the most popular combat sports — WKF-style karate, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, amateur muay Thai and MMA, kung fu/wushu, full-contact Kyokushin karate and amateur boxing — but, most importantly, many of these will be taking place simultaneously, side by side. And this year we have a new and extremely exciting sport, kudo, joining the fray. I doubt there'll be a punter in the place who doesn't stop to see what's up when they hear the pop of a competitor's flying fist buckling the *bogu* helmet worn by their opponent!

In addition, the World Association of Kickboxing Organizations (WAKO) will be taking over the kickboxing and muay Thai competitions, and also introducing a series of mat (rather than ring) kickboxing events with varying levels of contact to attract newcomers to the sport.

For those not sure of what the Arnold Classic involves, it began 25 years ago in Columbus, Ohio, USA as an elite bodybuilding contest founded by seven-time Mr Olympia winner and action-movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger. It has since morphed into the Arnold Sports Festival, which has become the largest multi-sport participation event and expo in the world. 'The Arnold', as it's called, has since been established in Spain, Brazil and, for the first time last year, Australia.

The martial arts and combat sports such as wrestling were among the very first activities to be added to the original Arnold Classic, and new events have been introduced every year. In addition to the aforementioned martial arts, the Arnold Classic Australia will feature powerlifting, CrossFit, a strongman competition, kettlebell sport, fencing and even chess, among other events.

With all that's on offer, anyone interested in testing their skills in competition will surely be able to find something to suit them. But if competing isn't your thing, hopefully the opportunity to check out so many different fighting arts in one place will be enough to bring you down for a look. There will be demos of different arts and *Blitz Magazine* — as an official media partner of the Arnold Classic Martial Arts Festival — will have an expo stand with various martial arts luminaries dropping in to meet fans, so look out for us.

Ultimately, the Arnold Sports Festival is all about encouraging Aussies to get involved in physical activity — but for martial artists, there are other benefits on offer too, including the chance to win one of 16 Adidas Combat Scholarship packs, or to draw the eye of Australian Institute of Sports Combat Centre talent scout (and *Blitz* 'Close Quarters' columnist) Paul Cale.

See you at the Arnold!



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EDITORIAL

MANAGING EDITOR Ben Stone
ben@blitzmag.com.au

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

Molly Morelli, Steven Talevski

CONTRIBUTORS

Matt Beecroft, Jarrod Boyle, Zach Broadhurst, Paul Cale, Mike Clarke, David Dangerfield, John Jory, Graham Kuerschner, Jarrah Loh, Clint Morris, John B Will

ART

ART DIRECTOR Javie D'Souza

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS Lysha Moniz, Diep Nguyen, Adibowu Rusli, Adam Summers, James Steer, Zeenia Bhikha, Jonathan Rudolph

DIGITAL & ONLINE

SENIOR WEB DEVELOPER David Ding

APP MANAGER/MARKETING Karl Nemsow

WEB DESIGNER Amanda Oliver

VIDEO EDITOR Justin Oleyar

ONLINE CONTENT PRODUCERS Steven Talevski, Zach Broadhurst

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Charlie Suriano, Clive Girdham

Cover photo: Pedro Sauer by Charlie Suriano

ADVERTISING SALES

GROUP MANAGER - NATIONAL ADVERTISING Keith Rozario
keith@blitzmag.com.au

MARKETING

MARKETING & EVENTS MANAGER Robyn Newman
robyn@blitzmag.com.au



BLITZ PUBLICATIONS
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Silvio Morelli

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER Stefanie Morelli

ADMINISTRATION & CUSTOMER SERVICE

FINANCE Min You

SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER Angelina Modica

CUSTOMER SERVICE Frances Ricchetti, Robyn Newman

Email: customerservice@blitzmag.com.au

Phone: (03) 9574 8999 Fax: (03) 9574 8899

PO Box 4075, Mulgrave, 3170

Web: www.blitzmag.net

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NEWS & EVENTS

BOOST FOR TAEKWONDO JUNIORS

Victorian Bailey Lewis and Catherine Risbey from the ACT have been selected from Sports Taekwondo Australia to compete for a \$10,000 prize in the 2015/16 Sports Boost program by Colonial First State.

STA selected the two juniors to represent taekwondo after being named one of four sports to be featured for the Sports Boost program that pledges funds to help athletes reach their dreams.

Colonial First State reached out to STA to showcase two of the sport's "brightest and highest-achieving" junior athletes. Gymnastics, athletics and cycling joined the martial art as the four sports selected.

Lewis and Risbey's nominations feature with an article and video on the Sports Boost website. STA will select one of the two as a finalist

who will receive a \$3,000 prize, with the runner-up collecting \$2,000.

An overall winner will be voted by the public in a voting contest that will last four weeks. The winner of that vote will receive a \$10,000 prize with the sporting organisation receiving \$15,000.

Lewis, 18, is currently Australia's number-one-ranked male in the under-54-kg category. He won gold at the 2014 Manchester Commonwealth Games. Risbey, 17, is also ranked number one in her division and has competed for Australia at the world championships and Pacific Games.

STA thanked Colonial First State for the "remarkable opportunity and the promotion of taekwondo".

To view their story, and to find out who made the final, visit www3.colonialfirststate.com.au/resources/



RENSHI CELEBRATES YONDAN GRADING

Renshi Maree Charnley successfully completed her *Yondan* (4th Dan) grading as part of Hoshiki Kiritsu Martial Arts' (HKMA's) recent 20th birthday celebrations.

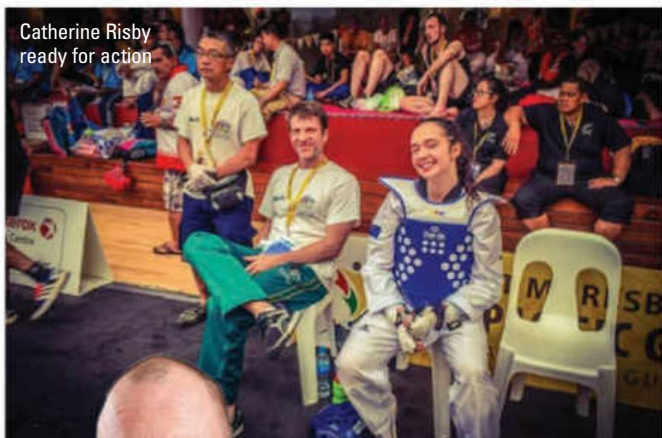
With an audience of over 60 individuals including six HKMA senseis and Loong Fu Pai Martial Arts 4th Degree Black-Belt Dai Sensei Wayne Boyd, Charnley was graded by Loong Fu Pai Martial Arts 8th Degree Black-belt Kancho Terry Lim.

Charnley was required to use three different weapons of her choice — *tonfa*, *nunchaku* and *kali sticks* — during the grading.

Charnley had to demonstrate exceptional control, precision, skill and practicality during the session, which included four *yakusoku* (predetermined defence sequences) against three armed attackers.

Husband and HKMA chief instructor Shihan Matt Charnley said her personal kata and three weapon-based katas were outstanding and devised with a high degree of difficulty.

"Her yakusokus flowed effortlessly and showed that by using the core principles of freestyle martial arts," said Shihan Charnley. "I was so proud of her achievement after over 23 years of training in martial arts and overcoming numerous injuries in recent times."



Catherine Risby ready for action

TIME TO GET KINETIC FIGHTING

Paul Cale is back in 2016 with his sought-after Kinetic Fighting seminars at the Australian Institute of Sport.

Paul Cale is a retired sergeant who has fought in Afghanistan and until mid-2013 managed the Integrated Combat Centre at the 2nd Commando Regiment, where he was in charge of developing CQC for Australian special forces. He is now leading the combat sports program at the AIS and runs Cale Integrated Combat.

Over the course of 48 hours, Sgt Cale will train participants in the combat principles of his Kinetic

Fighting method — currently used by Australian Commandos and Army — covering skill sets, situational awareness and combative mindset.

No prerequisites are required but places are limited. The \$880 cost includes full P-1, P-2 or P-3 qualification, full accommodation, three meals per day and facility access to the AIS Combat Centre, spa/plunge pool, fields, courts, athletic tracks and national sports information centre.

Email info@paulcale.com or visit facebook.com/caleintegratedcombat for more details.



CHARLIE SURIANO



Monie performing reiki

Martial artist spreads healing energy

Sensei Craig Monie recently held a Reiki Chi Energy Healing seminar at Cobra Martial Arts in Cannington, Western Australia.

Reiki healing therapy is said to have been discovered by Samurai Mikao Usui in the late 19th century but kept secret by the Japanese and used by the Japanese navy, until the mid-1970s when it was revealed to the West by Hawayo Takata.

A combination of the Japanese words *rei*, meaning 'God's wisdom or 'higher power', and *ki*, which is 'life force energy' (or *chi* in Chinese), reiki is administered by what practitioners call 'laying on hands'. It's primary aim is stress reduction and relaxation to in turn promote healing.

"Mikao Usui is believed to have trained thousands of people in the healing art but took only 21 days to reach the level of a reiki master," said Monie. "The healing process uses pure energy including chi — or *ki*, *prana*, life force, universal energy or source energy.

"It is especially good for emotional healing and releasing negative energy from your energy field, releasing emotional baggage that many of us hold onto from the past, which eat away at the soul and then the body..."

Monie plans to conduct more reiki sessions and seminars for Perth martial artists and the general public in 2016.



JAPANESE SHIHAN NAMED WORLD ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

The IKO World Shihan Association (IWSA) recently appointed 9th Dan Hanshi Hara Kunio as their inaugural president.

Peter McGuire of the IWSA said Sensei Hara's inspiring insights and popularity among the other shihans proved his eligibility.

Sensei Hara, who was appointed by So-Shihan Yamamoto, said the appointment gave him immense joy and honour.

"Goju-ryu karate is an ancient Japanese martial art, and I believe it is my duty to protect the traditional and true aspect of it, as a martial art (budo). With the development of modern sport, nowadays more than 100 million people are practising karate worldwide. I believe we are now reaching a new era for karate. This new era will focus on the protection and conservation of traditions and techniques."

Sensei Hara was born in Tokyo in 1938 and began training at Sensei Gogen Yamaguchi's Asakusa dojo. He obtained his first Dan gradings from Sensei Yamaguchi before being awarded 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Dans by the authority of the Honbu dojo. Hara Sensei was awarded his 9th Dan in 2010.



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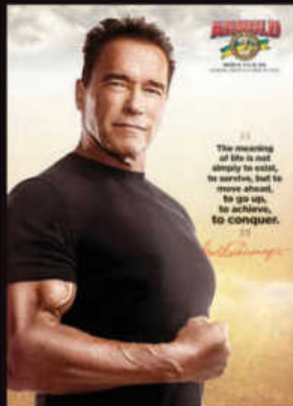
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NEWS & EVENTS

ARNOLD TO BRING MARTIAL ARTS TOGETHER



Australia's largest multi-sport festival is nearing, with registrations for the Arnold Classic now open.

Held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on 18–20 March, the Arnold Classic includes a three-day, multi-discipline martial arts event open to men, women and juniors. Championships on the weekend will include World All Styles, full-contact Kyokushin karate, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, kung fu, taekwondo, kickboxing and muay Thai, karate, MMA and kudo.

The ACA will also feature strongman, CrossFit and obstacle-course events as well as martial arts training seminars, celebrity speakers and action movie stars.

Registration to the event includes a three-day expo pass, an event T-shirt or cap, adidas combat equipment discount voucher, sports supplement samplers, a three-month digital magazine subscription, an Arnold Classic poster and a copy of *Blitz Australasian Martial Arts Magazine*.

To register now, visit www.acamultisport.com.au

Aussie appointed as WKF chairman

Shihan Con Kassis has been appointed as the chairman of the Kata Rules Commission at the World Karate Federation (WKF).

Kassis has practised karate for more than 40 years under Grandmaster Kenei Mabuni, son of Shito-ryu karate founder Kenwa Mabuni. He has been judging kata competitions at WKF events for more than 25 years.

"I figured that most commission members were very much kumite-oriented. I believe for this reason the president may have found it necessary to split the commission in two," said Kassis. "My understanding and passion for kata was a major influence on my appointment as chairman."

Kassis added that the commission is required to assess current rules and to propose and formulate changes in an aim to improve the level of judgement, and reduce the level

of subjectivity in kata judging. He says his appointment has allowed Australia to be at the forefront of international rules of competition.

"Today, from almost 200 member countries, Australia is one of the top leading countries in terms of the number of qualified officials and most senior officials. I must say, though, Australia has a long history of outstanding referees in the world, including previously Tino Ceberano and the late Frank Nowak, who were also world-leading officials."

Kassis, who runs Kassis Karate Academy in Tullamarine, Victoria has also been a chairman of the Victorian, Australian and Oceania referee commissions along with being the World Referee Commission chairman, WKF Sports Commission chairman and member of the WKF Technical Commission.



CHARLIE SURIANO



Kostic (centre) with Chikara Martial Arts' Kyl Reber (right)

KOSTIC HITS TASMAN FOR SIX

Serbian systema instructor Alex Kostic toured Australia in late November and early December hosting seminars of his modified Russian martial art, Homo Ludens systema.

The seminars encouraged participants to think differently and challenged their regular thought practices in martial arts. Kostic said his highlight of the tour was to see the continued development of Australian martial artists.

"In Australia I work with martial artists from so many backgrounds that it helps reinforce my training, as I know they will not let me get away with self-delusion of skill — they are always happy to test me and put me under pressure," he said.

Kostic said his form of systema is unique because it is open and has a "dialogue with other martial arts".

"It is not locked into a dogma. It is open to change, I am open to change. That change can be in the moment — spontaneous unfolding — or in deep research."

A central theme for the tour was static striking, which is heavy hitting from a stationary, walking or 'gliding' position. Last year the seminars saw martial artists working on dynamic striking for fast movement.

Plans are under way for another Alex Kostic tour in 2016 with the prospect of a national camp being discussed. For information on future seminars, contact Kyl Reber at Chikara Martial Arts via kyl@chikaramartialarts.com.au

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NEWS & EVENTS

JUDOKA IS AMONG TASMANIA'S ELITE

Dean Lampkin, a 1990 Commonwealth Games judo silver medallist, has been inducted into the Tasmanian Sporting Hall of Fame. The judoka was one of seven people entered on Tassie's elite sporting honour roll, and joins Commonwealth Games gold medallist and former Olympic judo coach Angela Deacon as the only other martial artist in the hall of fame.

Inducted alongside Lampkin were Richmond AFL great Matthew Richardson, former Tasmania AFL representative Geoffrey 'Paddy' Martin, jockey Bev Buckingham, Paralympian Dominic Monypenny, triathlete Craig Walton and rower Urszula Stanny as 2015 inductees.

"To get inducted along with someone like Matthew Richardson is quite humbling," said Lampkin. "I guess there's not too many in the Hall of Fame, so it's probably right alongside my Commonwealth medal."

The 3rd Dan Black-belt won eight gold, five silver and five bronze medals at the national championships. He held the national title for three years, but said his greatest highlight was walking out for the gold medal bout at the Commonwealth Games in 1990.



DALE CUMMING



CHARLIE SURIANO

BELTS GO BEYOND BEING BLUE

Go-Kan-Ryu (GKR) raised more than \$75,000 for beyondblue as part of their Blue Belt Project.

The Blue Belt Project is an initiative by GKR to help raise awareness and support for the beyondblue organisation, which assists in helping individuals with mental issues in the areas of anxiety and depression. Mental illness affects one in four Australians.

The Blue Belt Project used the sale of specially made blue belts, events and a special awareness week to help raise funds and awareness of the cause.

GKR Chief Executive Officer Stacey Karetsian (pictured) said their awareness week held between 16 to 22 November worked well.

"We asked all

students to wear their Blue-belts to classes to raise awareness and support for the charity. It worked out really well and we ended up selling over 3,000 belts," Karetsian said.

The awareness week also included a fundraising dinner held at the Novotel Sydney Olympic Park on the Saturday night, which was sold out to 230 guests. The attendees were treated to special speakers including beyondblue representatives, as well as auctions and live music.

Karetsian said GKR will be planning on running a similar charity fundraiser in both New Zealand and the United Kingdom next year. They also plan to allow other clubs to participate in Australia next year.

For more information on the Blue Belt Project, visit the website bluebeltproject.com

Selfie-stick to the rescue

A Russian martial arts institution has launched a new range of self-defence classes focusing on using a selfie-stick as a defence tool.

Yes, you heard right — the handheld extension pole that allows users to take a selfie at different angles may now be more than a photo tool.

Banned by Disney at its parks across the world for safety reasons in July 2015, the selfie-stick has become an area of focus at M-PROFI, a Moscow martial arts centre.

M-Profi spokesperson Daria Lapshina told British tabloid *The Daily Mirror* that the selfie-stick is often the only potential weapon a tourist carries.

"Unfortunately, very often a selfie-stick is the only weapon a tourist has when travelling abroad, and it has the advantage of often being at hand," said Lapshina.

"A pepper spray or a stun gun in the handbag might also

be effective, but by the time you've dug them out, it will already be too late. A selfie-stick, on the other hand, can be used instantly."

One of the organisers also told *The Daily Mirror* that the martial arts centre teaches individuals how to use the stick with a phone attached on the end.

"It presents many challenges because if you have a selfie-stick in your hand, and an expensive mobile phone on the end of it, it might achieve the desired effect to beat the attacker with the phone end, but you smash the phone."

So, if you're travelling overseas anytime soon, don't forget your selfie-stick!



DIEP NGUYEN

Taekwondo's Olympic mix-up

Australia's premier taekwondo athletes' hopes to qualify for the 2016 Olympic Games are under threat due to an administrative mix-up by the World Taekwondo Federation.

The AAP reports that Sports Taekwondo Australia is seeking clarification from the WTF regarding the allocation of ranking points from the 2014 Oceania Championships and the 2015 Pacific Games.

The AAP believe it is in relation to a WTF rule change on the number of athletes required in each weight class for points to be valid. The mix-up had led to some Australian athletes facing troubles to qualify for world grand prix events.

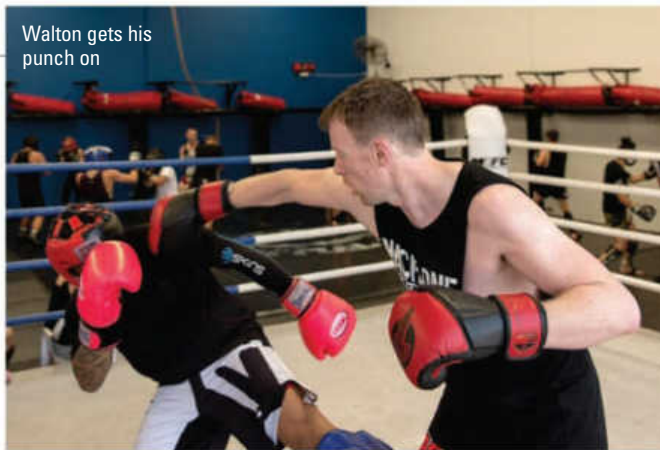
"STA and the Australian Olympic Committee are currently in correspondence with the World Taekwondo Federation to try and resolve this issue," STA chief executive Joeline Chisholm told AAP.

"The WTF has been somewhat inconsistent in their application of one of their competition rules with regards to rankings, and we're just in correspondence with them to try and understand that. We're still working through it with them."



Australia's TKD world champion Carmen Marton

Walton gets his punch on



SPARRING FOR SUPPORT

A father has sparred 100 straight rounds to help raise funds for his daughter's Paralympic dream.

M1FC gym owner Stephen Walton completed the endurance challenge that featured rounds of muay Thai and boxing. His 18-year-old daughter Robyn is a wheelchair track racer with cerebral palsy.

Almost \$7,000 was raised on the day, making Robyn's dream one step closer. The funds are expected to pay for her trip to her qualification and Paralympic campaign along with purchasing a new chair to be used in racing.

Along with Walton, three other members — Brett Collum, Sim Sehmi and Abanob Girgis

— completed the 100-round challenge, which took six hours to complete on a day when Perth's temperature reached 36 degrees.

"The heat was the big thing and of course the endurance of it by going for six hours," Walton said on the challenges of the event.

"We were going at quite a fast pace. Once we got to the 75th-round mark, we really started to struggle. We started getting cramps in the leg and we were overheating a lot. We tried to get as much fluid in as we could."

A sausage sizzle, live DJ and a pool were also part of the fundraising activities of the day.

AUSSIES CONTEST WORLD KYOKUSHIN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Karate's elite met in Tokyo, Japan for the 11th World Open Karate Championships on 20–22 November.

President of the Japan Karatedo Federation (JKF), Askashi Sasagawa, made a special appearance at the games, which was a significant step in the JKF's efforts to be included in the 2020 Olympic Games. He said the two organisations will support and work together on their Olympic dream.

"Kancho Matsui and I agree to further develop karate with the combined goal to enter karate as an official competition in the Olympic Games," Sasagawa said.

Matsui said that the International Karate Organisation Kyokushinkaikan will combine with the JKF in the effort to include karate as an official sport at the 2020 Olympic Games, but the two

bodies would remain independent.

Bulgarian fighter Zahari Damyantov was crowned world champion in a hotly contested tournament. French fighter Djema Belkhodja finished second while Russian Dermen Sadvokasov placed third.

Australia's team was led by Steven Cujic, who has been living and training in Japan for the past five years. Cujic scored strong wins in his first two fights before facing Russian Igor Titkov in an event contest. The judges couldn't separate the fighters, meaning they went to the scales, with Titkov then being awarded the win due to being 10 kg lighter than the Aussie.

Another Australian fighter to do well was David Tockar, who advanced to the last 64. Tockar defeated his Spanish opponent,



L-R: Trevor Tockar, Kancho Matsui, Graham Levy, John Barker, Jonathan Chriqui, Shihan Gorai and Alex Karnasopoulos

Albert Reyes, before losing to experienced Russian fighter Iaroslav Stanislavenko, who outweighed him by more than 30 kg.

Anthony Tockar and Reece Henderson of the North Bondi dojo, Jesse Connolly of the Revesby dojo, and Nathan Goodin and Shaune O'Farrell from Brisbane also represented Australia.

Following the open, a 'unison

kata' team from the North Bondi Dojo, comprising Alex Karnasopoulos, John Barker and 11-year-old Nathan Lotter, placed fourth in the Team Kata World Championships.

Also during the week, Graham Levy and John Barker received their 3rd Dan in a five-day grading, while Jonathan Chriqui was promoted to 5th Dan.

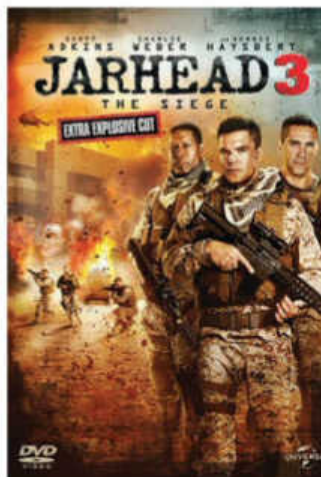
MARTIAL MOVIES WITH CLINT MORRIS

ADKINS' LATEST HITS OZ

Scott Adkins has a new film hitting the shelves in February titled *Jarhead 3: The Siege*. A sequel to a 'dramedy' from a few years back (that starred *Southpaw*'s Jake Gyllenhaal as a lazy soldier who finds himself suddenly and surprisingly caught in the thick of it), this one tells of a group of slacker soldiers who, while protecting the gates at a US embassy in the Middle East, are forced to go all John McClane when terrorists attack. Apparently Adkins doesn't show off much of his fighting skills in this one (though we can't be sure!), but no worries, it still looks entertaining.

Adkins has a new

Undisputed film on the way (Boyka: *Undisputed 4*), which is certain to be a showcase of the man's martial moves.



Sasha Mitchell, star of the *Kickboxer* sequels that were sans Van Damme



A KICKBOXER SEQUEL SANS SASHA!?

Well, it must be good! A sequel to the upcoming *Kickboxer* remake, *Kickboxer: Vengeance* is already in the works. Headmon Entertainment and Acme Rocket Fuel have announced that they've financed *Kickboxer 2: Retaliation* — and it'll again likely feature Alain Moussi as Kurt Sloan, the character Jean-Claude Van Damme (who appears in a different role in *Vengeance*) played in the '80s classic. *Kickboxer: Vengeance*, also starring Gina Carano, Dave Bautista and Van Damme, is due 2016. No word yet on how much later *Kickboxer 2: Retaliation* will come, but it'll probably be 12 months or so.

LEGENDARY PRODUCER READY FOR ACTION IN INDO

Veteran action movie producer Mario Kassar (*Universal Soldier*, *Total Recall*, *Rambo*...and the list goes on) will be producing Indonesian martial arts sci-fi thriller *Foxtrot Six*. From director Randy Korompis, the 2017 release will showcase choreography from *The Raid 2*'s Yayan Ruhian and Cecep Arif Rahman. Aside from the fact it'll be set in the future and feature a heap of action, no other details have been released for the movie.



Kassar with Arnold Schwarzenegger, star of numerous Kassar films

DEATH DUEL REDUX

A remake of the Shaw Brothers kung fu classic *Death Duel* (1977) is in the works with Derek Yee directing. Ironically, it was Yee who starred in the original film directed by Chor Yuen.

Like its predecessor, the remake, titled *Sword Master*, is an adaptation of Ku Lung's *Third Master's Sword*. It tells of a swordsman (Yee in the original) who, having defeated just about everyone in fight tournaments, decides to escape the life by faking his own death. Kenny Lin Geng-Xin (*Young Detective Dee*:



Rise of the Sea Dragon), Peter Ho Yun-Tung (*The Monkey King*), Jiang Yi-Yan (*The Bullet Vanishes*) and Jiang Meng-Jie (*Kung Fu Man*) will star in the remake.

CLINT'S PICS

AT THE CINEMA: *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*
ON DVD & DIGITAL: *Hitman: Agent 47*



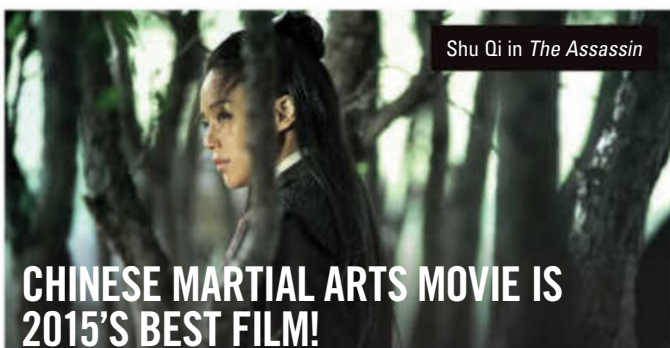
Early '90s action: when all you needed was a mullet, a gun and a good high kick

SEQUEL FOR THE LOVE OF JC

When he was offered the lead role in the upcoming *Hard Target 2* (releasing straight to DVD in 2016), Scott Adkins turned it down. Having already starred in a sequel to a Jean-Claude Van Damme movie (*Universal Soldier: Day of Reckoning*), the actor and martial artist had no interest in doing another. "I said, 'No, I can't do this again.' People will think that I am actively pursuing Van Damme films or they might think that I am some twisted super-fan of Van Damme...that when I was a kid I made it my life's work to become an action star just so I could make sequels to Van Damme movies," the actor said in a recent interview. "But the truth is, I was such a huge fan of Van Damme growing up and he was such a huge influence on me that actually in my mind — and only I can know how this feels — it just felt right.

"I feel like if anyone's gonna do it, why not me because I was so influenced by Van Damme as a kid that if anyone's gonna do it...and when you see the film and you see what type of character I play and what the story is, you'll realise that actually there's no one better suited for this part than me. And people keep comparing me to Van Damme and I've worked with him a couple times before, and it's coincidental really, but I don't know, if you wanna get somebody for the sequel, who else are you gonna get?"

Er, we could think of a few other guys. That said, Adkins can certainly kick adequate arse. *Hard Target 2*, filmed in Thailand, again tells of a man who gets used in a game of human hunting and turns the tables on his predators.



Shu Qi in *The Assassin*

CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS MOVIE IS 2015'S BEST FILM!

Critics have named the martial arts movie *The Assassin* the best movie of 2015. A poll conducted by *Sight & Sound* magazine, featuring 168 critics, named the movie, a Taiwanese film from Hou Hsiao-Hsien, the best flick of the past 12 months.

Set in the 9th century, *The Assassin* tells of Nie Yinniang (Shu Qi), a woman appointed to terminate corrupt government officials by her master, Jiaxin. When she displays mercy by failing to carry through with one of her hits, Nie is punished with an even harder assignment: kill her own cousin. Critics lauded the powerful female lead, the film's striking visuals and the terrifically choreographed martial arts sequences.

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Designed for the serious competitor at an entry-level price, the Fuji Suparaito features a pearl-weave jacket and ripstop collar and pants, with extra stitching for strength and durability. Approved for competition by the IBJJF, the Suparaito comes in white and blue as shown.

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FIVE MINUTES WITH PHILIP GRAHAM



Jump-starting Jiu-Jitsu Journeys

Philip Graham has founded a BJJ program allowing disadvantaged kids to train the martial art at no expense after his experiences not being able to afford training as a child himself. Now a BJJ Brown-belt, Graham is launching BJJ For Everyone at Garra Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in Darra, Queensland, to give children an opportunity to mature in a safe and friendly environment.

INTERVIEW BY STEVEN TALEVSKI

How did you start in martial arts?

I started like a lot of others. I started watching movies as a kid and I really got into traditional martial arts at one stage. I tried kung fu and karate, and then I moved from the traditional martial arts to sport martial arts like judo and muay Thai. I much preferred judo over muay Thai. I enjoyed the idea of grappling and not having to hurt somebody, just subdue them. In muay Thai you have to kick and punch the life out of someone before you are considered the winner.

When I was at a party with some friends, one was a big pro-wrestling fan who was collecting all the latest videos and had a copy of the UFC. He put it on and I was like, 'Oh my god, what is this?' We watched Royce Gracie, who was the smallest guy at the tournament, use some very basic techniques to subdue people who were bigger and stronger. That was on a Saturday and I was doing jiu-jitsu the following Wednesday. I went on the hunt for Brazilian jiu-jitsu straight after that and soon after I gave up all the martial arts I was doing and have just done BJJ exclusively after that.

Where has your martial arts journey taken you? What are your qualifications?

When I was in Ireland, I studied a sports and leisure management course in college, so I have a number of certificates through that. Now in Australia, I have my Brown-belt in jiu-jitsu, which I got



Graham is king of the kids

CINDY REVELL

recently on 5 December. I've been training in jiu-jitsu for around 12 years.

I've been spending a lot of time on my academy and training my students. I haven't really been taking care of my own BJJ journey as much as I should; at the moment I am trying to train as much as I can with people that understand the art a lot better than me. So I have my academy, which is going really well, and I'm really proud and happy with all of my students. Now I want the opportunity to help even more people.

Where have you travelled to train in jiu-jitsu, and did you find that the art is trained in a different way in

any of those those places?

When I was studying for my Blue-belt, I travelled to Portland, Oregon, USA, meeting 14-year-old wrestlers who were incredibly strong and seeing the methodologies they teach there as well. I met people like Tom Oberhue and Michael Chapman, who are amazing Black-belts in BJJ, but are so different. When I trained in the Philippines, that was a huge shock for me. When I went there I trained with other Blue-belts, and a few of them were straight killers! I almost felt like I didn't know BJJ when I went to train there. The same was when I went to Iceland. During my time there I went

to the same gym Gunnar Nelson [UFC fighter] trains at and their level was incredible. I asked them, "Why are you guys so good at jiu-jitsu?" They said there was nothing else in Iceland to do but train!

I found Australia to be a lot like America. It's a bit more of a relaxed attitude to learning jiu-jitsu, like you have your profession and then you train jiu-jitsu on the side. But my time in the Philippines and Iceland, it was very much like you worked your job to just pay for training. That's the biggest thing I took from them.

Why did you set up BJJ For Everyone and what will it consist of?

The main reason I did it was because when I was a kid, I begged my parents to do martial arts, but I had two brothers and a sister. Then when I went down for my free class, my brothers would come for their free class. We would go back to our mum — we were from a single parent household — and we'd tell her the cost of the uniforms, for signing up, for registration and then it was just deemed an unaffordable luxury. The thing for me is that when I was growing up, I never really worked hard at anything. I never really felt that feeling of accomplishment that comes with getting better at something. I feel that I have learned a lot more about how I can contribute to everybody around me; how to be more of a responsible person, how to be a better person overall. I felt like I learned a lot about that through my journey in BJJ. I guess I'm looking for these kids to come from lower socio-economic backgrounds to have the same experience, but a lot earlier than I did.

You mentioned it was unaffordable for yourself, and it is for a lot of others in Australia. How will the funds be raised for BJJ For Everyone?

What I am going to be doing is with some high-level Black-belts in BJJ. I have Kurt Osiander, who does a move of the week [on YouTube]. A lot of people find his videos to be entertaining, and he is a bit of an entertaining character himself. He actually did a traditional American tattoo-style painting/design and I'll be transferring that onto T-shirts and patches that will go on an online fundraising campaign. We're going to be using an Australian-based crowd-funding website called *pozible.com*.

We're going to be using a lot of the funds to bring in new instructors and just to cover all of the costs like jiu-

jitsu registration, competition and getting them decent mouthguards; they probably also need one or two kimonos. I have been approaching a lot of businesses as well to see if they want to do some sort of partnership or dual advertising campaign because we visit a lot of markets, fairs and local events to try to promote the local academy. We have a voucher book that can help drive the people who have sponsored the campaign and drive business back to them. That will be a win-win for everybody.

Having worked with disadvantaged children in the past, how do your experiences with them compare to students who are well off?

A lot of it comes down to attitude. Sometimes when the kids find out they're getting things for free, they treat it a little bit more with disregard, which I find very puzzling myself. But hopefully they understand it...if somebody offered me a free membership when I was a kid, I would've thought I'd won the lottery. I am definitely going to take an approach where people understand that somebody has paid for this and it's your responsibility to have a good attitude and to take care of it. Ultimately, though, a lot of the time, some of these kids that come from lower socio-economic or disadvantaged background, when it comes time to really get some grit in a jiu-jitsu roll or when they are competing, they tend to have an extra spark that some of the other kids don't have. But to tell you the truth, it works both ways as well. Some of the kids that come from higher socio-economic or advantaged backgrounds, there is dual input at home. Sometimes they are as gritty as they come, but I find that in my time working with disadvantaged kids,

THE TRAINER'S TIPS

Graham on how to avoid injury in jiu-jitsu training:

Try to train with a relaxed attitude. Don't worry so much about getting swept or submitted. If you get swept and submitted, that just shows you are training with the right kind of people. I found out that when I worry when I am training, that's when my performance is most lacking. Then when I am at my most relaxed, and I'm having a lot of fun when I'm training, that's when I find out that my performance can even end surprisingly [with a submission].

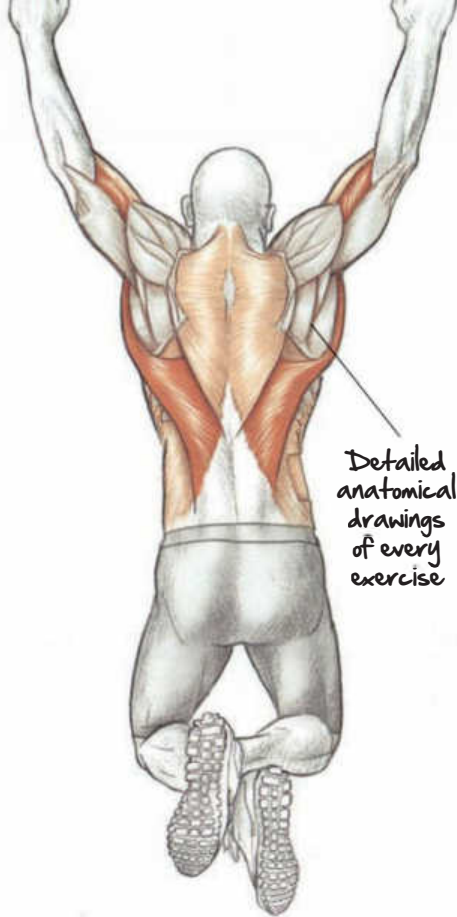
On the best ways to keep students motivated:

Have a good friendly attitude with the students. I don't think showing them a bunch of new and different techniques is a good idea. I think sometimes it's best to say to students who are, for example, longer and leaner, this or that kind of thing will help you, this suits your body and will help your development. Giving them advice that is tailor-made and specifically for them, I think that is a very good idea. I think trying to pigeon-hole your students and trying to make them all do something the way that you do it is a big mistake.



Graham with his partner

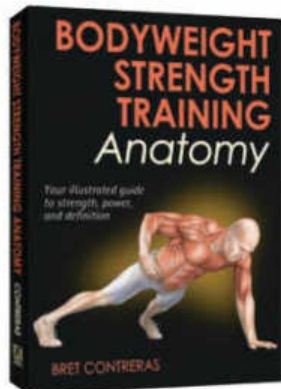
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they definitely want to win more.

What does BJJ and martial arts teach these disadvantaged children that traditional sports perhaps don't?

I won't say they don't teach them, but the formula that martial arts overall do teach kids is...for one, when you start a martial art, the learning curve is very steep. So you learn a lot at the start. Then over time — let's just say a club has a grading every six months — you get to see your learning in real life, it's tangible in the belt and the stripes. So you train your jiu-jitsu, you go regularly, you're a good partner, you have a good attitude and you get your grade up. As you're going on and on, your stripes go up and your colours go up. The actual hard work results in something tangible that you can hold in your hands, and in martial arts, because a lot of the time it's about the individual, the inner journey teaches the kids a lot about their own character and personality. But no martial art is just about the individual, because you can't get better on your own, you have to rely on your team as well. Even though it is an individual sport, you still build a good team dynamic and attitude.

But, I think not only martial arts but traditional sports, learning music, learning dance, learning art, I think all of those things can build self-confidence. There is a quote from Thomas Carlyle, which is my favourite quote, and it is, "Nothing builds self-confidence or self-esteem like the feeling of accomplishment." And

people can get that in a lot of different ways.

What qualities do you aim to instil in all your students? And are these skills more difficult to teach to older students who may have been through or are currently partaking in higher education?

A lot of the time it really depends on the kids when they come in. I've had four-year-old kids come in and they have the sternest attitudes — I'm like, 'Oh my god, you're very serious.' Then I have kids who come in that are 12, 13, 14 who are very malleable. You give them a couple of kind words and solid advice, and you let them know they're not just someone there practising a couple of techniques, they're somebody who is part of our team and we are there to help them.

I have seen changes, it's just a matter of a couple of weeks or a couple of months. Instead of being very facetious and argumentative, they understand that I'm on their team and they're on my team. It really depends on the kids that come in; we tend to give the same kind of help and attitude to all of the kids. There are kids that are doing very well, but if we feel like someone is lacking or falling behind, we definitely give them all the

attention to bring them up.

Do you encourage your BJJ students to enter competitions or do you suggest they focus on the training and self-defence aspects of the art?

I thought it was fine just to let all the kids train and not have to compete, but I actually found that the training is the labour and the competition is the fruit. My idea at the start was that they will train, but as it turns out, a lot of the kids have asked me specifically, "I want to compete, I want to go out there." I was kind of surprised by that. As I've got more kids to competition, more other kids wanted to compete as well; it's like some of the kids were leading by example. I don't ask the kids to compete, they do the work at the club and then they want to see what their work looks like against somebody else's work. ■



"If somebody offered me a free membership when I was a kid, I would've thought I'd won the lottery."

ARE YOU A SAME-SEX ATTRACTED MAN WHO PRACTISES MARTIAL ARTS?

As part of my doctoral research at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, I am conducting interviews in Melbourne with same-sex attracted men who are, or have been, involved in martial arts.

If you are 18 or older, a same-sex attracted male, a current martial artist or have previously practised martial arts at some stage of your life (for two years or more), please volunteer for this study.

You will be reimbursed for your time.

To participate in this important research please go to: <http://ssamarcshs.com/>

For further information please call Damian PhD candidate La Trobe University Doctor of Philosophy on **(03) 94798757** or dp3wilson@students.latrobe.edu.au La Trobe University Human Research Ethics Committee (S15/217).



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THE PROFESSOR OF PAIN

A master class
in grappling with
Pedro Sauer

World-renowned Brazilian jiu-jitsu instructor Master Pedro Sauer has done it the hard way, there's no doubt. Growing up on the rough streets of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in the 1960s and '70s, Sauer discovered that learning to survive meant learning to fight, and his brawling quickly led him to boxing. But he began a steeper ascent of that learning curve at the age of 14 when childhood friend Rickson Gracie introduced him to his family's fighting art of jiu-jitsu. Today, 57-year-old Sauer oversees a vast network of students who have been hooked by his unique ability to impart the principles of the art, as much as his history of proving it in no-holds-barred battles during his development years. Here, the submission artist gives his opinions on the big issues facing BJJ today and offers an insight into the art he knows so well.

INTERVIEW BY BEN STONE AND STEVEN TALEVSKI | IMAGES BY CHARLIE SURIANO





Master Pedro, what is your 'mission' as an elite instructor in the world of BJJ? What is the goal that motivates you to get out onto the mat every day and keep doing what you do?

My goal is to keep passing on Grandmaster Helio Gracie's philosophy, [and] the mechanics and strategy of self-defence. That's what keeps me motivated all the time. I want to make sure the art that Grandmaster Gracie developed does not disappear; to make sure that everyone who studies with me will be able to pass on this art [and] has a simple understanding of the art of jiu-jitsu.

Your mentor, Professor Rickson Gracie, commented that after travelling the world doing seminars for several years, he felt that despite the growth of sport grappling, many students on the mats, even Black-belts, showed an inadequate understanding of the fundamental principles of BJJ. As a very well-travelled instructor yourself, has your experience been similar?

I express the same thing; today the sport of jiu-jitsu has a complete different dimension. It is well understood, a lot of people train, a lot of people grapple, and a lot of people mainly focus on the sport aspect of jiu-jitsu. That's very good for people to keep sharing, but the main aspect is self-defence — it was developed for a small guy to protect themselves against an attacker, a bigger guy... Grandmaster Helio developed jiu-jitsu to help us understand that and based on those understandings, you can go to tournaments, you got to any other field, military, law enforcement, social life and you can apply the principles of jiu-jitsu Grandmaster Helio shares. That's what keeps me going, it's to make sure those principles never disappear.

Why do you think the art has changed so much from its origins?

Because there is too much emphasis on competition. It's almost like a fashion, a trend, people want to do it. The funny thing about that is, if you look at any school, there is a very small percentage of people that compete. No matter which school; it could be a school that is devoted to the aspect of competition even though schools cannot put all their students in to compete. So, what happens is that they don't develop self-defence because it is not applicable in a tournament, where you have rules, referees and there are no strikes.

When Rickson was talking about the lack of self-defence, I can see this very clear. It is so clear, we barely see a Black-belt understand a takedown, or about knives or weapons — so today a lot of people make fun of jiu-jitsu. They learn krav maga for self-defence, but Gracie jiu-jitsu has such an incredible self-

REAR CHOKE DEFENCE WORKSHOP



In this scenario, Master Sauer is grabbed in a rear choke and pulled back...



...so he goes with the energy of the attack, stepping back with one leg as he secures overhand grips on the attacker's arm...



...so he is anchored to it and can apply his whole bodyweight as he drops his foot back and turns his hips sharply...



...breaking the hold and his foe's balance, tripping him against Sauer's leg and bringing him down.



Keeping the arm secured, Sauer rolls his opponent onto his side using his right hand and shin...



...then drops his weight through his knees into his opponent and uses a two-handed grip to lever the extended arm against his thigh.



defence system that's just been forgotten. The Gracie academy with Ryron and Renner are doing the best job right now in bringing the self-defence aspect to the public. Those people who attend the class are going to understand those aspects since the beginning.

Beyond the specific mechanics of jiu-jitsu, what do you consider to be the key elements of self-defence? What are the most important skills or traits needed to effectively defend oneself nowadays?

The most important thing to understand is jiu-jitsu as a principle and the way that you don't actually attack, you don't actually force the opponent to a move to submission — you actually have to learn to defend first. You understand every aspect of fighting, including what somebody can do against you. What you do is you just protect yourself 100 per cent of the time. When somebody is trying to attack you and you're already protecting yourself, that's when you counter attack, that's



Here, Sauer has been grabbed in a rough headlock-style grip. Again, he immediately locks onto the arm...



...and uses the space between his hips and his opponent's to step across as he drops his bodyweight sharply...



...bringing his opponent down onto his hips as Sauer steps behind him.



Keeping hold of the arm, Sauer then launches himself upward, throwing his foe back over his hip...

REAR CHOKE DEFENCE THREE WAYS

Your immediate response to a rear choke attempt will depend on the attacker's intention (i.e. the energy you get). At left is the most basic and effective defence when grabbed around the neck from behind: grab the attacking arm with both hands (anchoring to it) and double over at the hips, launching the attacker off their feet. They will fall to the same side as the arm that's been grabbed (in this case, the attacker's right) and you will have control via the grips on their arm, which will end up extended.



5

...and pulling down through the shoulder to bring the opponent down hard.



6

When his attacker hits the mat, Sauer immediately drops his weight onto him and changes his grips to apply an arm-bar against his thigh.

when you take your opponent off guard, that's when you catch them very easily. It's almost like showing your left hand and catching him with the right, but you're only going to be able to do that if you do understand where your opponent passes the point of protecting himself. He is no longer able to protect himself, so now it's worth going for the submission.

In sports jiu-jitsu, because

you have points and a time limit, if you try to fight in a jiu-jitsu tournament with the aim to submit your opponent, you may lose the match, because the clock is ticking against you and the referees are there to count points. It is a lot easier to focus on the points and get your arm raised at the end of the match than actually to fight with the objective to submit your opponent — at the end the

outcome may not be so good.

But, if you think about your life, the way you do jiu-jitsu, we don't get into fights that often. People don't get in fights, but if you do get yourself in a bad spot, you have to use the jiu-jitsu strategy to get out of there and jiu-jitsu gives incredible tools so you're able to negotiate. But you are only going to be able to learn those tools when you learn from the bottom up.

Do you think this has changed at all in the time you've been training, and across the different cultures, from Brazil to the USA?

It's been changing a lot. In the early days, for us to go to a tournament and win by points was almost like a shame. Our instructor was expecting to see a submission. There was a lot more submission in the early days. Today, everybody is so

sharp, they are so prepared, they are so conditioned for the sport side of jiu-jitsu...of course you see submissions because when the opportunities are there, they just do it. But for you to see submission masters, submission hunters, those are a very rare commodity now.

Knowing that you have limited time to spend with students at a seminar and that they may be of very different ranks and levels of experience, how do you structure it to make the most out of the opportunity?

We basically build moves from slices. I like to take a technique from the bottom and start breaking slices. As long as the student leaves the seminar, or the class, with the understanding of the knowledge, the principles, the tricks that come with jiu-jitsu, I believe that's well worth a day on the mat. We have to make sure every day on the mat we learn jiu-jitsu the way jiu-jitsu is supposed to be — a premier self-defence art, that's what I'm looking for.

Martial arts competitions developed because practitioners wanted to test the effectiveness of their techniques for real fighting, but without seriously injuring or killing each other. BJJ competition has come to a 'tipping point' of sorts recently, in that a lot of people are questioning the way the sport's rules have developed in a direction that is the opposite to this original goal — what is your opinion on the state of the rules and the sport's role in securing the future of 'true' Gracie jiu-jitsu?

Sports jiu-jitsu is going to be there forever; it is fun and it's a great place for you to test your skills. [But] for the art to be passed on, we need to follow curriculum. We need to make sure the student doesn't get hurt and make sure they come back the next day for more. The curriculum has to be structured

in a way that the students are going to be able to see those moves and to be able to develop a muscle memory.

I've been studying the Gracie Combatives at the Gracie Academy and I'm very impressed with the system they've developed. I believe it is a very smart, very intelligent system. They are basing it on protection, with an opponent that is not very skilful — it's based on more of an unpredictable attacker. Any fighter who has the skills, they're not going to be walking the streets looking for a fight. Anybody that does not have the skills, they're more susceptible to get into a fight. They might believe in themselves, they might've had a drink and it's the heat of the night...they're the attackers that you'll usually see.

The Gracie Academy is doing a great job in my point of view by bringing back the self-defence of Grandmaster Helio Gracie. The strategy, the curriculum is incredible; it's a beautiful curriculum put together to allow students to put one move after another, after another.

The most important aspect is no getting injured or hurt. I've been doing martial arts for 40 years, and in my school alone in Salt Lake City, in just one location; I've had 7,000 students train there. I came to the conclusion that for the first year, I lost close to 90 per cent of the students because we used to train way too hard. We used to train not for MMA, but for a fight. At the time we had to prove that jiu-jitsu was efficient. We used to fight every night, and I lost all the students. I lived in Utah for 16 years and I've produced 12 Black-belts there. If I had a better curriculum, if I had a better method, I probably could've had 150 Black-belts coming out of the one location.

I can tell, the method to teach jiu-jitsu, the Gracie Academy has that: it's very simple, mechanical, a very easy approach. Everything is by the book and I think there is no way you're going to be able to learn those moves otherwise given

THE MASTER'S TIPS

MASTER SAUER ON WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON MISTAKE STUDENTS MAKE ON THE MAT, AND HOW TO AVOID IT:

The most common mistakes by students on a mat are that they try to use too much muscle. They try too hard, they try to muscle through every move and at that moment you just build a habit. You're building a bad habit that you'll pay a huge price for — if you don't pay it on the spot, you'll pay it soon. Pretty soon you are going to get hurt or you will hurt somebody. So I think for students to be safe, number one, don't muscle yourself; relax, let your opponent do his mechanics against you, understand what the guy is doing against you — be friendly, put a smile on your face and ask questions. You ask the guy, can you tap? You have to tap every single night, and I have to tap. Then you can ask your partner: I loved how you did that, can you show me how you did that? And everybody will be able to share the move with you. That's the strategy to build people on the mat.

ON THE SECRET TO LONGEVITY IN JIU-JITSU TRAINING:

The secret to longevity is to train jiu-jitsu in a very smart way. Jiu-jitsu is a very intelligent form of martial arts. So if you try to build muscle to get better at jiu-jitsu, you're not going to have longevity on the mat. You have to get fit, but you have to get fit in a way that you're not bulked, but stronger, with a very powerful body that is lean. What you do is you try to build mechanics; they have to develop and it comes with finesse. You have to have finesse

when you do jiu-jitsu. You have to explore jiu-jitsu every single day and the more you explore finesse, the more you are going to build on the mat. The less you explore finesse, the shorter your life is going to be on the mat. Everybody gets older and eventually when you get older and you don't have finesse, nobody wants to train with you. All the young guys are going to terrorise you, whip you left and right, so your life is going to be very short. When you have finesse, you are going to be able to glide from one move to another move. You're going to be very smooth; you're going to utilise your opponent's mechanics and his own muscle to be able to 'hitch-hike' on him. So the key of the game is to learn to hitch-hike.

I'm an older guy — I'm close to 60 right now — so if I try to fight somebody at 20, I have no chance, I am going to get tired in two minutes, three minutes maximum. A guy who is 20 years old can go for an hour, two hours, three hours. I used to train six hours every day. Today I try to put in quality time, not quantity time. If I could go back in all my years of practice I would slow down my hours on the mat and put in more practice time [than sparring].

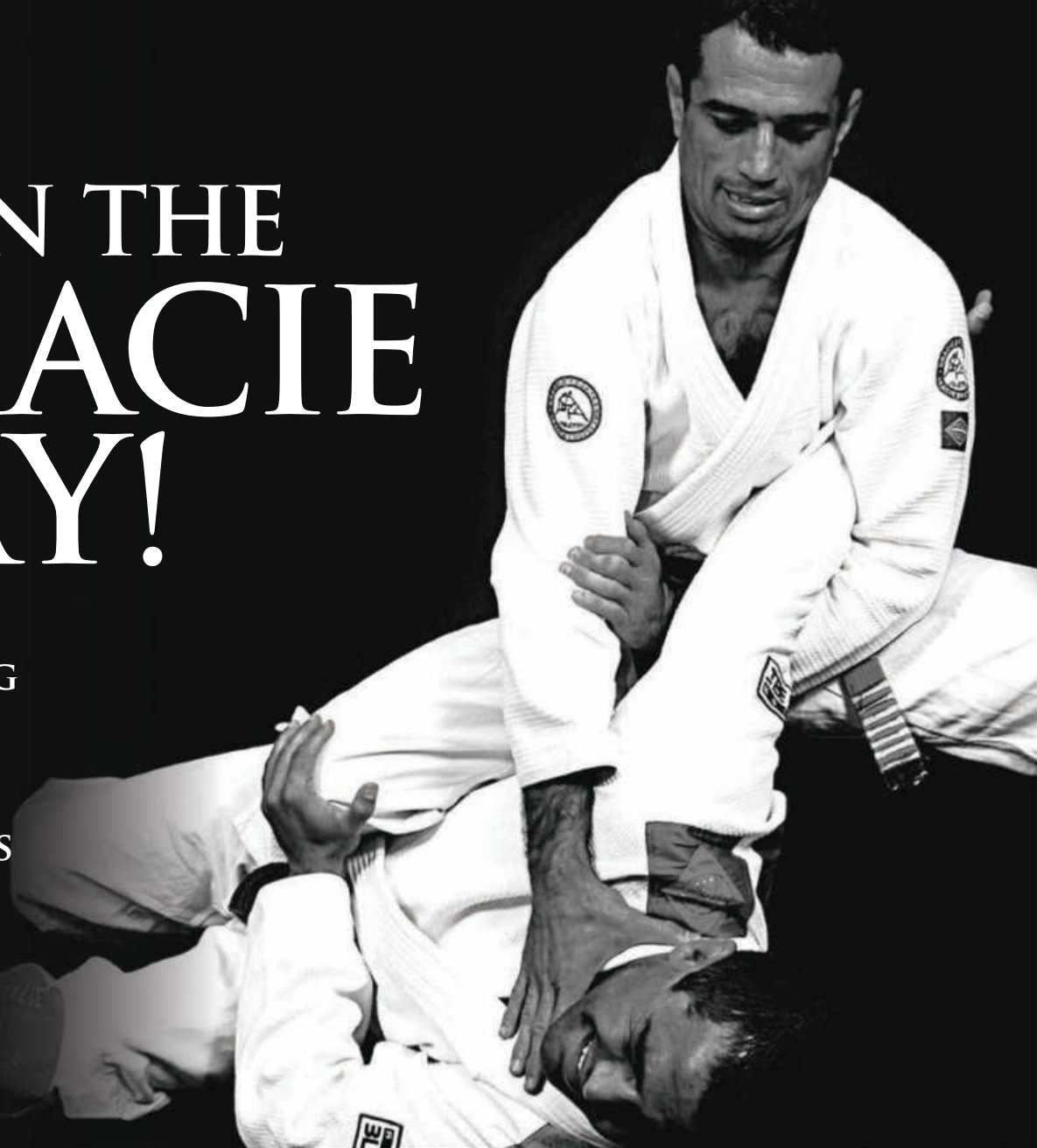
Of course, when I came to America to do all those no-holds-barred matches, my body got completely destroyed. I have 11 screws in my body, so I'm somebody who needs to be careful with every move I do. But still, with the jiu-jitsu that I have today, with Grandmaster Helio Gracie's mechanics, I am still able to jump on the mat and do some moves, even with 11 screws in my body!



DAVID PALFREMAN

LEARN THE GRACIE WAY!

DISCOVER
THE TRAINING
SECRETS AND
HISTORY OF
THE WORLD'S
MOST FAMOUS
FIGHTING
FAMILY



Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Theory and Technique

By Renzo Gracie and Royler Gracie with Kid Peligro

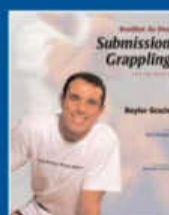
The Brazilian jiu jitsu style stems from the premise, garnered from analysis of actual street fights, that the outcome of many fights is decided on the ground. While most martial arts deal only with the initial punching and kicking stages of combat, Brazilian jiu jitsu concentrates on ground combat. Photographs and step-by-step instructions show how to master the techniques of Brazilian jiu jitsu and increase your combat effectiveness.



Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Black Belt Techniques

By Jean Jacques Machado & Kid Peligro

Jean Jacques Machado now presents his entire Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu system in book form for the first time. Detailed is a complete repertoire of Jiu-Jitsu moves to handle any situation that arises, whether on the mat or on the street. Techniques are not presented in isolation, but rather through a series of moves that guide practitioners from an initial threat or opportunity all the way through to a submission hold. More than 100 step-by-step positions are demonstrated.



Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Submission Grappling Techniques

By Royler Gracie with Kid Peligro

The 145-pound Royler Gracie has won three consecutive ADCC titles and four world titles, along with victories in Pride, Vale Tudo, 21st Century Warriors, and many more. Here, he spills his secrets for the first time, showing 102 positions designed specifically for the slippery, fast-paced, unpredictable world of no-gi grappling. It offers Royler's tips on successful combination moves, garnered from his more than 300 professional fights, as well as advice on training routines, mental stamina, and avoiding injuries.



Mastering Jujitsu

By Renzo Gracie

Renzo Gracie — instructor of elite fighters and champion of many grappling and MMA events — will help you progress from isolated skill-development to a full set of tactics and fight plans, and introduce you to the concept of combat phases, teaching you to attack from any phase. You will learn how to react to your opponent in any situation. Whether you're caught in a bottom position or attacking from the top, in the clinch, Gracie reveals the key strategies designed to give you the upper hand and drills to learn them.

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ARM-BAR CHECKMATE



Here, Master Sauer has his opponent pinned in side-control and is controlling his hips (note his grip on the belt and placement of his right arm).



Moving his right hand across and under his opponent's triceps, Sauer makes his opponent think he's attacking that arm...



...and as his opponent clamps down on Sauer's shoulder and brings his right hand around to defend, Sauer seizes the right wrist and switches his hips...



...freeing his legs up to move and enabling Sauer to extend the opponent's arm out...



...then use his top (right) leg to pin the arm against his left thigh. With the opponent's elbow locked out against Sauer's leg...



...Sauer then brings his other foot over to secure the arm and increase his leverage. Sauer then applies the arm-bar...



...by putting his weight through his feet into the joint (with his leg acting as the fulcrum) while keeping his opponent's torso pinned via his grips on the belt.

the same quality and quantity of time. You will learn moves, and if you quit, at least you'll quit with the knowledge in your pocket. You're going to have an understanding of self-defence right from the beginning, and I think that is very important.

What is your involvement, if any, with the various competition bodies/formats and with Professor Rickson's Jiu Jitsu Global Federation?

I am in 100 per cent support of the Global Federation. I think Rickson is doing a wonderful job and I will support the federation at any time, all the time. Rickson has a very good

point of view and he wants to try to bring back the aspect of self-defence — for that he can count on me 100 per cent and I'll be backing this up. It's the same with the Gracie Academy: with the self-defence, I'll back it up.

In a jiu-jitsu tournament, I don't focus too much on the tournament, but I focus mainly on submissions. We have a lot of guys who go and compete and they do pretty well because they're not there thinking about scoring the point; they go for it from the beginning to the end because that's how we do it in schools, that's what we practise in our academy. Everybody in

the academy knows, it's not the moment to shake hands — your objective is checkmate. You don't just want to take him down and hold onto him for the whole time; when going for the checkmate, you can prevent the checkmate happening against you. That's the whole point in learning jiu-jitsu the right way.

Do you have a favourite competition format? Which one do you think is most effective for developing and testing real-world jiu-jitsu skills?

I like Metamoris; I think they're doing a really good job. I believe the Rickson organisation will become a path for

competition eventually that will be able to test your skills. We have many competitions, and they're all very good and they attract a great amount of people. They're very tough, strong and powerful, but I'd honestly like to see more submissions. I don't want to see this art be held with just points and advantage, that's not what we should do. I don't think this should be the approach to preserve this art for the future.

Another controversial development in recent times has been the Gracie University concept of Rickson's nephews, Renner and Ryon, which involves

studying the art online. What are your thoughts on this? Since people are going to look online for tips and instruction, is it smart to make available a well-developed and structured program with strict limitations, or is it better to stick to hands-on instruction and let people try their luck with YouTube, etc?

Hands on is better, but I believe the Gracie University is doing a great job. I believe the system is very intelligently put together where it allows anybody at any size, any form, any shape to understand the principles of jiu-jitsu. It's very simple, it's basic and it's only 36 techniques for you to get started — you don't get hurt. The Blue-belt program is an incredible program and one of the best I've seen in my life for the kids.

I believe that Grandmaster Helio Gracie [when he was ill as a young man] learned jiu-jitsu from watching his brother Carlos Gracie teaching class. I believe any single person can learn jiu-jitsu by watching. I learned myself by watching, so I believe the Gracie University is a very smart and intelligent way to share jiu-jitsu with the community. Of course, anybody who would like to go a little bit deeper, you just have to look for a qualified instructor. But for whoever doesn't have access to an instructor, the Gracie University is doing a marvellous job.

Most martial arts claim to be 'complete', yet most don't deal with weaponry as is commonly used in street attacks, and if they do, it's often an afterthought rather than integrated into their syllabus. What is your approach to training students to deal with weapons?

I think we should all learn to deal with weapons. If you look at Grandmaster Helio Gracie's book, we have all the weapons there on the pages. When I learned jiu-jitsu, we learned with weapons. I myself escaped from

a robbery in Brazil in 1984/5. I had a robber get in my car and put a knife to my neck and try to kill me. Jiu-jitsu saved my life by being able to protect myself, to disarm the guy and pretty much send him out of my car.

I believe weapons [techniques] in jiu-jitsu are very smart, very intelligent, it is simple and it's by the book. It's the same way we do grappling: we have all the knowledge of the ins and outs, all the strategy for when you fight on the ground. Guess what, we have all those strategies for the weapons, but like you said before, today you can see Black-belts who have no idea what to do with [a weapon]. That's because they have the belt more because they won so many tournaments; they progressed so fast by winning tournaments, and it was not required for them to understand the weapons system. Those Black-belts are only going to produce people who can compete. They are not going to produce people who are going to be more respectful and safer, and who are going to be able to deal with an opponent who is drunk, or with some kind of aggressive opponent who attacks you with a knife or glass, or bottle. Gracie jiu-jitsu has those answers.

MMA is bigger than ever since it was first introduced to spread Gracie jiu-jitsu — but is it still the best vehicle for displaying the true potential of the art and propagating it?

By far, the UFC and every other MMA show, you can tell if you don't have Gracie jiu-jitsu, you better not even step in. You have to have knowledge of the art of grappling. If you don't have that, you're only going to be able to deal with it if you're lucky.

I came from a boxing background before doing jiu-jitsu and I can guarantee you that boxing is an excellent form of defence, excellent form of attack and I advise everybody to learn it. But if you only have the boxing, and they [grapplers]



Sauer teaching at the Sendai Jiu-Jitsu school of Robbie Singh (right)

close the distance against you, you will feel like you're swimming in the water with sharks. You are going to feel completely lost like I did when I was a kid. You have to have the knowledge of the art and UFC is there right now to prove to us that without jiu-jitsu there will be no UFC.

Everybody today does jiu-jitsu, but they don't learn as much or need to do as much, because the only thing they have to do is almost like an anti-jiu-jitsu. You have to learn a few moves to be safe, to get yourself back on your feet and try to ground-and-pound and try to score the takedowns, try to score the strikes. That's how you win a fight in the UFC. You can try putting somebody in a triangle choke 500 times, you can put somebody in an arm-bar 500 times, but you don't get one point from that. But if you punch the guy in the face you get one point, if you kick him in the head you get a point and if you take him down you get a point, but every submission attempt you don't get a point. Now, the grappler does not have a good advantage anymore in UFC.

You are renowned for your abilities as an instructor. In your

mind, what is the 'formula' that makes an effective instructor?

I believe the number one thing is that you have to understand the principles of jiu-jitsu. You have to understand the ins and outs, you have to understand the philosophy. You have to be a role model, you have to give an example and live your life with dignity. You've got to have respect, integrity, discipline, courage, self-control — you have to have all those to be able to be an instructor.

I believe when you put yourself in as an instructor, you have a big responsibility. You may have 20, 200, 2,000 people trying to be just like you are. If you're a knucklehead trying to be an instructor, a bad guy who doesn't respect anybody trying to be an instructor, look at what you're building. Look at what examples you are giving to other people. So it is a very important job and we should make sure that nobody teaching jiu-jitsu or martial arts is a criminal, has bad intentions or animosity towards women, or a lack of respect towards women or kids, or smaller people. I think we need to build a lot of character.

You can learn jiu-jitsu every day, but you have to have the integrity behind it. ■



“There is no posture in karate.” So said Masatoshi Nakayama Sensei, the late headmaster of the Japan Karate Association and recognised as one of the greats of Japanese karate — specifically, Shotokan, when it was still in its first generation and directly connected to its Okinawan founder, Gichin Funakoshi Sensei. However, the rigidity of form dictated by most modern karate syllabuses would appear to be in direct contradiction to Nakayama’s instruction...so at what point did karate change from what it was then to what it is now (in its popular form, at least)? *Blitz* karate correspondent Kyoshi Mike Clarke delves into the meaning of the master’s words and challenges some of the most widely accepted assumptions about karate.

STORY BY MIKE CLARKE | IMAGES BY CHARLIE SURIANO

Karate’s NISHING POINT



When what you do
becomes what you are

It’s interesting, isn’t it, how even after all this time since Nakayama uttered those words, so many karateka (not just among Shotokan’s followers) are unable to move their mind beyond the various physical forms encapsulated in the word ‘style’? That so many karateka have forgotten the wisdom of their elders, or remain ignorant of it, reflects poorly on the quality of much of the karate being passed on today. For karate to have meaning, it has always been necessary to begin with conditioning your body and, in doing that, conditioning your mind too. The focus then turns

toward honing your techniques before, ultimately, learning to throw away all that you come to believe you have ‘mastered’.

This ‘vanishing point’ in the learning of karate is what I believe Nakayama Sensei was alluding to.

In previous articles I’ve discussed the role of kata in learning karate and how a constant study of your kata is the key to comprehending karate’s true nature and potential. A genuine and honest approach to your training will, eventually, lead to a state of mind where knowing the difference between ‘winning’ and ‘not losing’ becomes

apparent. Karate has never been about winning, for conquest of any kind is fuelled by your ego: karate is about not losing! The difference is not mere semantics. If I can learn to avoid conflict, then, by default, I will never lose a fight.

You can’t make karate your own by manipulating it to suit your purposes; rather, karate becomes yours by accepting ‘all’ the challenges that come with the learning of it, and, as a result of that process, learning to appreciate your personal strengths and weaknesses. I’m saddened by the number of karateka who continue to cling so tightly to the inertia of *kihon*

(basics); as if by learning to write the alphabet over and over again you will one day become a poet. That the essence of karate can be understood through the endless investigation of kihon is a myth put about by karate associations in their quest to create dependency on the leaders and, so far, it has been a very successful strategy.

Karate is an activity you ultimately pursue alone, within — in the company of others perhaps, but only you face the problems that stand before you, and only you will find a way to solve them; for if you cannot, your karate will stop. Taking responsibility for your karate runs counter to the concept of all karate associations, but consider what Christopher Columbus once said, “You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to leave the shore.” With that in mind, you only have to look at the number of karate associations in existence these days to understand just how few karateka have courage.

Kata, not kihon, has always been the conduit through which you eventually come to understand karate. Kumite, at least *jiyu* kumite (free sparring), plays no part in ‘traditional’ karate training, and it never did. Gichin Funakoshi Sensei didn’t believe in it, so if you associate the karate you’re doing with him, you might want to rethink the depth of your connection. The notion that *jiyu* kumite somehow allows you to ‘test your skills’ is yet another myth, for your mindset when sparring bears little resemblance to your state of mind in a fight. Besides, while you can continue to spar for long periods of time, fighting lasts no more than a few seconds; if someone isn’t seriously hurt by then, it’s merely an altercation. The confusion surrounding the effectiveness of karate today is, I believe, directly related to instructors trying to apply karate against karate rather than against ‘non-karate’ attacks; that and the fact that many karate

instructors have never had a real fight and therefore have no actual experience to fall back on.

Just as you come to karate in your own unique way, I believe you will come to ‘know’ karate in your own unique way also; you will make your own path, in parallel with others maybe, but your path is no less unique because of that. I suppose it hardly matters why you started karate training, one reason being as good as the next; but the determining factor for appreciating the essence of karate is, as far as I can tell, not found in the type of karate you happen to practise, or even with whom you practise; for karate is available from one source only: you!

The longer you spend looking beyond the study of kata for the essence of karate, the longer it will take you to find anything at all of lasting value; but if you think otherwise, let me wish you all the best in your efforts. In terms of budo, a karateka who spends his time in the pursuit of physical perfection, or esoteric wisdom, is unbalanced; for the essence of karate is found in the imperfection of natural movement, and not in the robotic mimicry

of your instructor, or the philosophical limits of their personal experience.

When I became a karateka, in January 1974, I stepped into a world I knew nothing about. I knew a lot about fighting — winning, losing, hurting people, and being hurt in return; of dealing with post-fight adrenaline dumps, awareness, and even the concept of *sen-no-sen*... albeit under a different name. However, I knew nothing much about self-discipline, nor did I appreciate the human attributes of patience, consistency and humility. The dojo was a strange place to be back then because I was being challenged to put my ‘self’ to one side and adopt ideas and a code of behaviour I wasn’t at all sure would serve me well in a fight. My freedom to engage who I liked, how I liked, to take the first hit if it allowed me to grab the guy and shove his head through a shop window or throw him into oncoming traffic, was stifled by learning to stand, move and block — defend myself — in ways that filled me with no confidence at all.

I quickly discovered karate was wrapped in morality, and its ethical borders presented me with many problems. Karate *ni*



Gichin Funakoshi Sensei

sen te... what!? There is no first attack in karate? You have to be kidding me, right? And who the hell came up with an idea like bowing to your enemy? From my limited perspective on karate back then, such things were complete nonsense. Morality gets in the way of fighting — I believed it then and I believe it now — but that’s the point, for karate without morality leads to boorish behavior and, if left unchecked, brutality. If your karate training is authentic, then morality is not only present during training, it dominates everything you do in the dojo. Many teachers of karate today are unable to move beyond their ‘hard’ physical training, their dependency on speed and power, and their addiction to how things are done within their association or dojo. As a result, there is little opportunity to discover a connection to a calm mind or a sense of probity toward others; further evidence of the imbalanced nature of their character, and their karate.

My early karate training, just like everybody else’s, was full of physical ‘controls’. Things I had to learn to do with my body in a manner that pleased not only my sensei, but various other folk too, like the people who conducted the grading tests by which my progress in

Masatoshi Nakayama Sensei



COURTESY OF SHOTOKAN KARATE MAGAZINE

FIREMAN'S CARRY SQUAT



1
If you don't have a *kongoken* (right) but do have a partner...



2
...fireman's carry squats will give you the kind of leg and core strength required for budo karate. Maintain posture, stay balanced.

CONDITIONING BUDO-STYLE



The *makiwara* and *ude kitae* (pictured) are Okinawan karate's key tools for conditioning not only the body, but the mind as well

Conditioning for technique-specific impact can be done with a partner, and will give you a good gauge of how effective your blocks will ultimately be.



PARTNERED BEND-AND-LIFT



1
Another useful two-person drill with direct application to the movements in karate kata: stand back-to-back with arms interlocked...



2
...then bend forward with a straight back, lifting your partner off their feet. Stand again slowly, then it's their turn — repeat for reps.

SIT UP & PUNCH



1
In this variation on a common old-school conditioning drill, two karateka interlock their feet and ankles then lower their backs to the floor...



2
...and perform a sit-up in unison (keeping the feet and legs as relaxed as possible so as to engage the abdominal muscles more so than the hip flexors)...



3
...pausing momentarily at the top of the sit-up to each strike the other's chest with the same hand, keeping the other hand up in a guarding position.

karate was being measured. As a result of such an education, and this crept up on me like a ninja in the night, my karate became a series of physical manoeuvres and well-practised choreography. All of which was committed to memory and could be regurgitated upon demand whenever the next grading test came around, which in those days was an absurdly frequent three months! I look back now with dismay at my naïveté. Whatever progress I was making was not in karate, but in a particular way of 'training' in karate; and although I had no idea at the time, I eventually came to understand that the first is a very different activity altogether than the second. Once I became aware of that, I moved on.

I'm no longer sure when I first came across the Japanese term *wabi-sabi*, the subtle feeling experienced when observing the austere beauty in imperfection; but whenever it was, I recognised it immediately. I appreciated the beauty so often dismissed in imperfection, and instinctively understood this as a way of appreciating karate technique as well. How often do you hear the word relax, and how many times is karate said

to be natural? But ask yourself, have you ever managed to fully relax (in mind and body) while struggling to conform to the set method of moving as laid down by your style of karate? With all that inward and outward tension in your legs, your shoulders drawn back, and worrying if your heel is up or down when you punch...is it possible to relax? Many talk about principles being the bedrock of karate, then proceed to force their followers to assume positions that lack any affinity with their natural movement and body shape, thus making it even harder for them to turn those principles into actions.

When you are constantly corrected for being incorrect according to the fashion of your style, how can your karate ever be natural? When was the last time you experienced the relaxed clarity of *mushin* during your karate practice?

Many karate instructors resort to party tricks in order to keep their audience captivated; it's a common enough tactic when the people training already have a good understanding of karate. In that case, the instructor often feels a need to confirm his authority, hence the physical party tricks

or displays of questionable self-defence against a predetermined (karate) assault like *mae geri*, *mawashi geri*, or *jodan oizuki*. Rather than encourage fellow karateka in a training session, many karate instructors prefer instead to spend the time they have available moulding their captive audience into their way of thinking and moving; and although this is a common enough situation, there is nothing natural about it.

Instructors are able to assume authority only because you give it to them; when they become the 'master' instead of the elder brother (or sister) guiding you, it's almost certain that you will become lost. For once a 'masters' authority is set rigidly in place, karate always begins to stumble blindly on from one generation to the next. I once read a wonderful definition of what the relationship between karate teachers and their students should be; it simply said, "A good sensei points out where to look, but not what to see." So the question is, are you a good sensei, or merely an instructor pointing out what everyone should be looking at?

An appreciation of the imperfect, understood in

Japan as *wabi-sabi*, stands in stark contrast to the quest for perfection many karateka today are encouraged to undertake. Tournament kata has evolved into sterile displays of gymnastic choreography. Rather than reflect the fighting strategies of karate, performers prefer to display their passion for performing...look at me, look at me! Although kata have, do, and will change in how they are performed, the principles upon which they are based remain constant, or at least they should. For without that consistency of principle, there is no tradition within karate to keep, preserve, or pass on to others who come after you; and all you're left with is a bunch of kicks, punches and blocks.

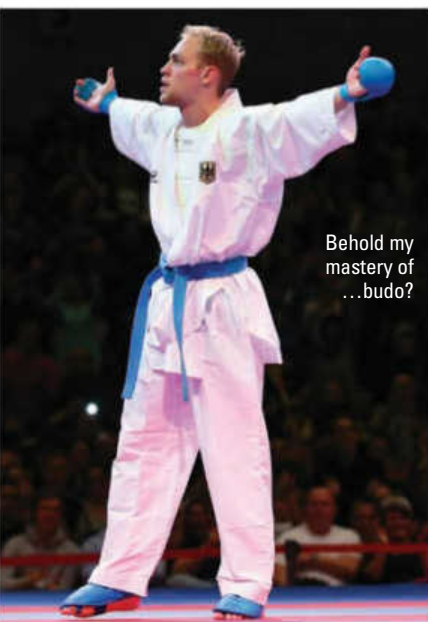
The longer you look at your karate through half-closed eyes, the longer you will continue to see only half of what karate really is. So, enjoy your sense of belonging to a global assembly if you're comforted by that, continue the fan-like worship of your instructor and seniors if it makes you happy, and enjoy the unbalanced nature of the activity you are involved in if it makes you feel safe. The falsehood, that by following another person blindly you will somehow develop a clear vision of karate yourself, often becomes apparent late in the day for karateka; and when it does, their sense of disillusion is often overwhelming. Essentially, karate is not something you learn, it's something you come to realise: it is a way of being in the world.

I truly believe that karate is in grave danger of losing its soul and its morality, and as a result, losing its way. The cultural heritage of Okinawa has been transformed into a sport, degraded to the level of prideful displays of physical power; in short, karate is coming to a kind of anthropological dead-end. Karate as a way of 'being in the world' has been transformed into a product, something that can be bought and sold. Let me be crystal clear:



Choreographed displays of karate vs karate bear little resemblance to original budo

CARMEN JASPEREN/AFGETTY IMAGES



Behold my
mastery of
...budo?

MARTIN ROSE/BONGARTS/GETTY IMAGES

if you're not actively opposing that approach, of watering down karate for cash, then you are actively complicit in pushing budo karate toward extinction. It's something to think about if you're inclined to just shrug your shoulders when witnessing poor behaviour from your associates in karate.

Had karate's departure from Okinawa to the rest of the world been direct, bypassing Japan altogether, I'm not sure the original moral compass with which karate was imbued would have lasted until today. That would have depended upon the character of the individuals introducing karate to the rest of the world, as well as the individuals they chose to teach. But certainly in the case of karate's introduction to Hawaii, which predates its introduction to Japan by decades, history suggests that the Okinawans did not develop opportunities to 'grow their business', and showed an adherence to the then cultural norm of how karate was transmitted.

Once established, Hawaiian karateka invested in the art by bringing notable teachers from various schools in Okinawa to the islands. There seems to have been a quiet sense of pride among the local diaspora in accepting guardianship

of a cultural artifact, linking the Okinawans in Hawaii to their homeland. No such consideration was given to karate once it landed in Japan, where, within a few short years of its arrival, karate had been consumed by an ever-growing number of Japanese 'styles'. Within 20 years, Okinawan karate had all but vanished in Japan. Consumed, certainly...but had it been properly digested?

Until the karate you learn can be accepted, absorbed and then thrown away, you will continue to splash around in the shallows of what's fashionable rather than what's necessary. The 'way' of karate is long and deep, and immensely personal. It is a passage through life fraught with hazards and mistakes that arise from the frailty of being human. A quest for perfection exposes a part of that frailty; for it presupposes that we are capable of achieving perfection should we ever stumble upon it. Don't be fooled by the claim some make about the nobility of budo being found in the act of searching (for perfection), because in truth, that amounts to a statement of defeat; an admission that no matter how sincere your training is, you only have failure to look forward to.

Budo is clear and unambiguous and will, if you open your mind to what it has to teach you, highlight the difference between fact and fiction, myth and legend, and the importance of recognising when it's time to let go. For in the end, karatedo should reflect a part of who you are and not just what you do. Only when you rid yourself of the falsehood of perfection, and the dependency that particular deception creates for you on the need for continual instruction, will the truth of what karate is become apparent. At that point, everything you thought you knew for sure about karate will vanish. ■

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THE SCIENCE OF COM

PART TWO:
Motivation affects technique



Australian amateur team boxer Jeffrey Horn (in red) battling Ukraine's Denys Berinchyk in the light-welterweight (64 kg) quarterfinals at the London 2012 Olympic Games

PHOTO BY SCOTT HEAVEY/GETTY IMAGES

BAT



Harsh or helpful? Direct or diplomatic? If you're a sensei, sifu or coach, knowing how to talk to your students or athletes to get the best out of them is not always easy. Never fear: the scientific minds at the Australian Institute of Sport Combat Centre have been hard at work to find the best way forward for Aussie coaches, and you. Here in part two of this series looking at groundbreaking research into martial arts and combat sports, PhD scholar, kickboxer and strength and conditioning coach Israel Halperin joins the University of Nevada's Professor Gabriele Wulf to explain how specific words used by coaches can motivate us to perform better.

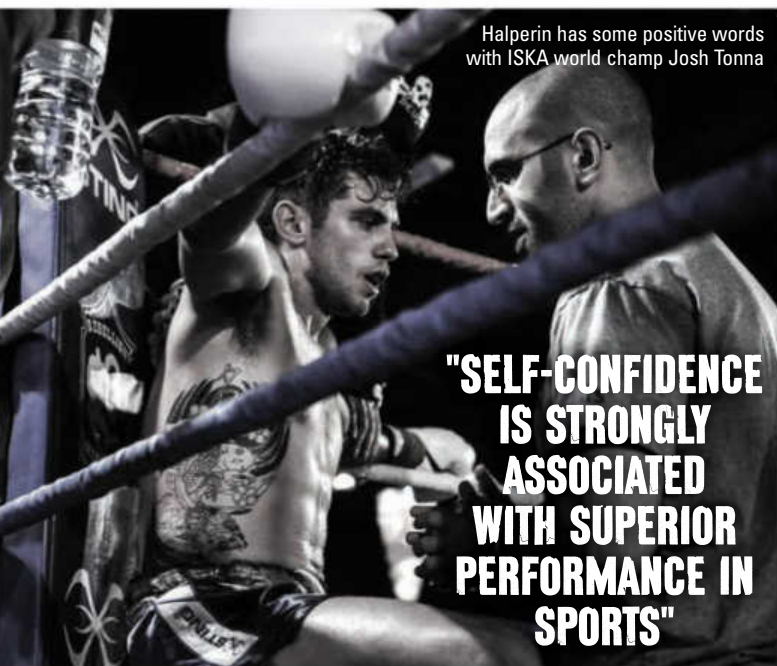
STORY BY ISRAEL HALPERIN & GABRIELE WULF

Coaching feedback is the cornerstone of learning and advancement in martial arts and combat sports. In our previous instalment we introduced the concept of 'attentional focus' and what type of instructions bring out our best technique, and in this article we will discuss the types of feedback frequently employed in combat sports. Generally speaking, there are two kinds: positive and negative. Positive feedback essentially refers to any advice or commentary concerning performance that is complimentary in nature — for example, "You are looking sharp, keep up the great work", "That boxing combination you just delivered looked very powerful", "You significantly improved your technique compared to last week", and so on. Conversely, negative feedback is critical in nature, for example, "You are looking sluggish out there, wake up", "That boxing combination you just delivered was too slow, you have got to turn your hips", "You can do better than that", and so on. As a result of recent studies into the effect of both kinds, we at the AIS argue that positive feedback should be favoured as much as possible because it has advantageous effects on learning and performance.

GET POSITIVE

The beneficial effects of positive feedback statements have been demonstrated in a number of recent experimental studies. Results indicate that training conditions where positive feedback is the norm tend to enhance the trainees' expectancies of future performance and this mental effect in turn offers a physical pay-off, resulting in improved motor learning and performance. In some studies, for example, feedback was provided after relatively successful performances for one group of participants and less successful performances for another group. While one might expect feedback to be more useful if it is given after flawed attempts, findings consistently showed that feedback about good performances produces more effective learning. Positive feedback not only facilitates learning in the longer term, but often has an immediate beneficial influence on motor performance. In fact, it has been demonstrated to increase movement accuracy, timing and balance. Moreover, individuals were able to sustain effort for longer in a muscular endurance task compared with when they received neutral or negative feedback on the same task.

Interestingly, positive feedback enhances movement economy (defined as the amount of energy utilised to perform a given movement task). In one experiment, trained runners ran on a treadmill for 20 minutes at a constant speed under two regimes: in one no feedback



Halperin has some positive words with ISKA world champ Josh Tonna

"SELF-CONFIDENCE IS STRONGLY ASSOCIATED WITH SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE IN SPORTS"

WILLIAM LUU

was provided, and in the other participants were told that they are very efficient runners. Simply providing the runners with this positive feedback led to reduced oxygen consumption. While none of these studies directly investigated martial arts, the results have important implications for martial artists because the ability to sustain effort, move efficiently and accurately, and maintain balance are all key attributes of successful practitioners. Positive outcomes are generally seen when performers feel competent and successful, whereas feedback that is mostly corrective and/or prescriptive tends to undermine the performer's sense of competence, with negative consequences for performance and learning.

MOTIVATION, CONFIDENCE & PERCEPTION

The beneficial effects of positive feedback on motor learning and performance are mediated by motivational factors. Positive feedback leads to enhanced self-efficacy or confidence, satisfaction with one's performance, increased interest in the task, reduced concerns about one's performance or abilities, and more positive

emotions. These factors allow students and athletes to shorten the acquisition time in mastering new techniques. Providing positive feedback increases what's known as 'intrinsic motivation', defined as the degree to which behaviours are driven by internal rewards. Intrinsic motivation is associated with feelings of joy and pleasure during training/competitions instead of the feeling that one has to train or compete to please the coach or family. Intrinsic motivation contributes to the long-term success of martial artists and combat athletes because, aside from its effects on task interest, motivation to practise and the like, feedback suggesting that one is doing well often has an immediate desirable influence on coordination. Reducing performers' concerns or nervousness while also increasing their confidence through positive feedback leads to greater movement effectiveness and efficiency — in fact, several studies showed that participants felt greater confidence in their abilities and in their future performance under pressure after receiving positive feedback.

Not surprisingly, self-confidence is strongly associated

with superior performance in sports. Of special relevance to combat sports is the observation that winners of karate and taekwondo competitions reported higher self-confidence compared to the losers of the bouts.

PUNCHING FOR POSITIVES

During the 2015 Australian National Amateur Boxing Championship, we recorded, transcribed and analysed the verbal feedback boxing coaches provided between rounds of competition. In addition to other types of feedback such as external and internal focus instructions, which we discussed in the previous instalment, we investigated the frequency of positive and negative feedback. The good news is that as a whole, boxing coaches implemented positive feedback nearly twice as much as negative feedback. Interestingly, however, a different picture emerged when we separately analysed the results of winning and losing bouts: whereas coaches in both winning and losing bouts provided a similar amount of negative feedback, in winning bouts coaches provided twice as much positive feedback as compared to coaches in losing bouts. This is an intriguing result that points to a possible relationship between the type and frequency of feedback provided, and the match outcomes — but, with that being said, it isn't possible to draw a conclusion of cause and effect from these results. That is, there are at least two possibilities that can explain the results: (1) when athletes perform well, coaches reward them with positive feedback, and (2) the positive feedback enhanced the athletes' performance. This issue remains to be resolved but we believe that the two scenarios are not mutually exclusive. In view of its important implications, this topic requires further investigation, and we are now undertaking a project aimed to shed more light on it.

ADVICE FOR COACHES

As illustrated in this article, the choice of feedback can considerably affect a student or athlete's motor performance as a result of its motivational impact. Confidence, perceptions of task difficulty, muscular endurance, movement accuracy and efficiency play a key role in martial arts and combat sports, so when given choice, positive feedback should be preferred over negative feedback. In training and competitive environments, AIS's best practice is to resist the urge to immediately provide (negative) feedback when students do not execute a technique in a proper manner or perform it without adequate intensity. In fact, such feedback is often redundant as athletes are aware of their less-than-perfect performance. Instead, highlighting positive aspects of performances and then offering a potential solution for the issue at hand will likely go a long way. This approach will lead to a favourable state of mind, faster learning and better performance.

Former combat-sports athlete Israel Halperin is a kickboxing and strength and conditioning coach, and a PhD scholar with Edith Cowan University in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS). Halperin works at the AIS Combat Centre, testing and monitoring athletes, conducting research and providing overall support for the four Olympic combat sports of judo, boxing, wrestling and taekwondo.

Gabriele Wulf is a professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition Sciences at University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA. Dr Wulf studies factors that influence motor skill performance and learning, such as athletes' focus of attention and motivational variables. Her research has resulted in 175 journal articles and book chapters, as well as two books. ■

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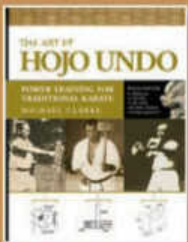
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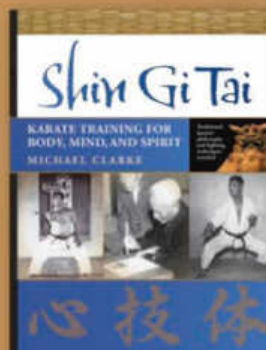
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THE ARROW CATCHER

Master of reflex, Anthony Kelly

Not your ordinary kung fu instructor, Sifu Anthony Kelly is perhaps better known as 'The Arrow Catcher'. Although the name would suit a comic book hero — and he has in fact been featured on a TV show called *Superhuman* — Kelly is just an ordinary man with extraordinary focus and commitment. And perhaps a little crazier than most if you consider he's the holder of the most Guinness World Records on the planet — most of them for deadly feats of fast-twitch muscle and steely nerve.

STORY BY JARROD BOYLE

A lifelong martial artist, Anthony Kelly holds Black-belts in 15 different styles and has experienced training in more than 40 others. He is also the most accredited coach in the world according to the *Guinness World Records*. Guinness themselves are the ultimate testimonial given that he holds different records for a number of outlandish and extreme feats of skill and reflexes.

Kelly's adventures in catching deadly projectiles began 16 years ago while sitting on the couch.

"I used to do a lot of training with this particular young guy, Andy Johnson, and one day I felt too tired to train, so I suggested we sit down and

watch a movie. The movie was called *The Last Dragon*. It's an '80s classic; I swear, that movie changed my life.

"Anyway, it starts with the hero having to catch an arrow that he selects; it's a specific arrow with a specific flight. I said to Andy, 'I'd love to catch an arrow.' He said, 'Let's do it.' He was a bit out there, like me."

Andy Johnson remembers that conversation well.

"I used to train with Anthony at his place in Armidale in the yard, on the back deck. We were watching this movie [The Last Dragon] and you see [the arrow] on a fishing line. The hero, Bruce Leroy, ducked one, blocked one

and caught one.

"Anthony said, 'That's pretty cool, but it can't be that hard.'

"I said, 'You've got to try that.'

"He asked me, 'Have you ever shot one?'

"No."

Not to be discouraged by a lack of experience, both men went into the backyard to discuss the proposition further.

"[Johnson] had to learn to shoot," says Kelly.

STUART LEALE





“CATCHING ARROWS, IF YOU GET IT WRONG, IT'D GO THROUGH YOUR EYE, THROUGH YOUR BRAIN AND OUT THE BACK OF YOUR SKULL. IT WOULDN'T MAKE FOR GOOD TV.”



SCAN TO SEE
KELLY CATCH
TENNIS BALLS
AT WORLD-
RECORD SPEED



Guinness World Records officials watch as Kelly catches tennis balls at top speed

STUART LEALE



Clockwise from above: The poster for Kelly's appearance on Chinese TV show *Impossible Challenge*; Kelly with Chinese actress Zhang Ziyi (of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* fame) who appeared on the show; Kelly demonstrates another of his talents, firing darts from a blow gun; teaching at a conference for Australian tennis coaches; catching fishing spears underwater for yet another Guinness World Record

THINGS GOT OFF TO A SHAKY START WHEN JOHNSON AND KELLY BEGAN THEIR SEGMENT WITH A DEMONSTRATION OF THEIR UNARMED SKILLS



"I had to learn the stance and figure out the hand position — so I wouldn't get killed."

The plan was taking shape.

"We put a stick in the ground, I walked back 15 metres and shot arrows at the stick," Johnson explains. "Then we thought, 'We'd better systemise this,' so we put a line on the ground so we knew where we were shooting from."

"The aim was to take out as many variables as we could. I shot at the stick for half an hour, and then Kelly went about a metre forward from the stick and about a metre to the side. I'd aim at the stick, he'd jump in and try to catch."

"Once he started to hit a couple [with his hand], he started to get there. The technique was that he had to get used to coming over the top and catch and spin to take the inertia off. If you caught it like a tennis ball, the arrow would go straight through your hand."

The most remarkable aspect of the whole episode was the fact that it proceeded without incident.

"After five minutes, he got used to jumping, and once you knew where the arrow was going to be — not coming toward you — it flew just out



to the side. That's when the next step of confidence came, standing where he needed to.

"He caught about six on the first go. Within about 45 minutes [of learning to shoot], we were catching arrows. We watched the movie at 10, caught the first arrow by 11, and ducked off for lunch at 12."

While the process sounds somewhat cavalier, keeping training sessions intense and brief was integral to keeping them safe.

"We practised every day for no more than five to 10 minutes to keep the risk of getting shot down. If you do it for three hours, like anything, your concentration deteriorates and you lose focus. You only need both of you to miss and someone gets it through the hand, wrist or chest. If you can [catch an arrow] three or four times, you can do it any time."

Naturally, an extraordinary feat truly becomes extraordinary once it is witnessed by others.

"Two or three weeks out from his martial arts school presentation, Anthony decided to demo it," says Johnson. "He got TV crews [to attend], but the Chinese restaurant the presentation was held in had bad lighting and the cameras

couldn't pick it up. The third time, they got [the arrow catch] exactly."

Once in possession of video proof, Kelly sent it in to Guinness World Records to have the feat verified. Their response was enthusiastic, to say the least.

"Next thing, we're on a flight to Madrid to the largest Guinness conference in the world," says Kelly. "I'm from Armidale in rural New South Wales — I'd never been out of Australia before!"

Kelly and Johnson discovered that in Madrid, the variables had multiplied.

"It was the first time we did consecutive arrows," Johnson says. "We'd never practised it in that scenario. Prior to Madrid, [Kelly] had only caught six at a time. In Madrid, we had 40 arrows and ended up shooting for two minutes. It was pretty hectic. You had to be switched on or, in front of a studio audience, somebody was going to get an arrow through the chest."

Things got off to a shaky start when Johnson and Kelly began their segment with a demonstration of their unarmed skills.

"We had to do a bit of a

demonstration before we started, and we were both as nervous as hell. I accidentally hit Andy and gave him a blood lip."

Fortunately, the wayward punch did not affect Johnson's aim.

"I threw a punch, he blocked it and came back, [hitting me] on the jaw. I kept going; I've been hit before, but I knew I had to switch on and shoot arrows."

The pressure of an international television audience was considerable in addition to the unfamiliar circumstances the men were working with. That said, old-fashioned, disciplined training proved to be the decisive factor.

"On the first attempt, I caught six [out of 10 arrows]," says Kelly. "We didn't realise that we were allowed three attempts! Then, on the second [attempt], I caught all 10."

For those who might find catching arrows before a live audience insufficient proof that Kelly's reflexes are among the world's fastest, he's even had them tested at the University of Belgium and the University of California, LA (UCLA). Their determination was that he is genetically gifted, something Kelly says is evident by gazing back into the branches of his family tree, five generations of which were rooted in Armidale, rural NSW. He remembers his grandfather, George Kelly, the area's most famous bushman, seizing venomous snakes by the tail and whipping them so fast their heads would crack off. He also set rabbit traps with his fingers.

Grandpa Kelly never caught any arrows, but he'd never seen any kung fu movies, either.

"I met Anthony about 20 years ago, through the National All Styles tournament," says Glenn Coxon, martial arts veteran, kickboxing promoter and fellow Guinness record holder. "In 2011, I got a phone call from

Guinness in Italy and was asked to go on their show to try and break my own record."

Coxon (profiled in the last issue of *Blitz*) holds the world record for the most boards broken in one minute. He set that record 10 years ago and his total of 359 still stands.

"When I got to Milan, I ran into Anthony in the lift."

Coxon and Kelly soon discovered that while their skills may have been remarkable, they were far less exotic than many of their counterparts.

"Walking into the hotel restaurant after a day on-set is like walking into a freak show. You've got the woman with the world's longest fingernails. The two tallest female twins in the world (both of whom are seven-foot-four); you've got the world's three strongest guys.

"The world's smallest man and the world's smallest woman, not to mention a priest from New York who was the world's greatest knife thrower. Also, there was the 'Great Nippulini.' His trick was to pull a cartload of scantily clad women along with chains attached to his nipples. There was also a chap named Kobayashi, who was the world's fastest — and greatest — eater. He was as skinny as a rake."

Coxon makes the distinction between Kelly and the rest of the Guinness crew simply and adroitly. "Guinness is a mix of people who run the spectrum from skills to freaks. A lot of things [Kelly] has done are really dangerous. It scares the hell out of me that one day he's going to get it wrong. When I saw him in Italy, he was catching tennis balls at 80 kilometres an hour.

"A few weeks ago, the tennis balls were travelling at 200 kilometres per hour. He had bruises all over him where he missed. He was coughing up blood. One of these days... Catching arrows, if you get it wrong, it'd go through your eye, through your brain and out the back of your skull. It wouldn't make for good TV."



Fortunately for Kelly, the first time he got an arrow through the hand was during a rehearsal the day before the live event. He was due to appear on *Guinness World Records* [TV] in Mumbai, India, and he went on to do the show the next day, hand covered in tape.

Danger aside, Kelly was not to be deterred. With arrow catching down pat, plans for a more spectacular and even more obscure feat were formed.

"I met the Guinness record holder who can hold his breath for the longest time," says Kelly. "Stig Severinsen; I think he's up to about 22 minutes. It got me thinking, 'How do we move under the water?' I had an old spear gun lying around and I thought, 'I could have a crack at this.'"

Unfortunately, the spear gun did not lend itself to record attempts quite as well as the traditional bow and arrow.

"You couldn't believe the trouble we had. I had to get weight belts to hold me underwater, goggles that wouldn't fog up, there were spears flying everywhere while holding my breath..."

The stunt was a success, however, and that record has never been successfully challenged. His students at his day job where he teaches

as a learning support officer discovered that his spear gun activities have achieved a degree of notoriety online.

"Just the other day I was in a YouTube 'Top 10 Craziest Stunts'. I was [ranked] number eight."

Kelly has also spent time catching other objects, including tennis balls and shuttlecocks travelling as fast as 300 kilometres an hour, not to mention paintball pellets — unexploded — that travel at 300 feet per second.

It's the dangerous stunts that exert the greatest fascination, however.

"Out of all his records, nothing is as exciting as spear guns and arrows," says Johnson, the original archer. "It's that element of danger."

Feats of speed and skill like catching arrows are part of the fundamental skill-base integral to the ordinary practice of martial arts, and while Kelly might be somewhat superhuman in this area, he's been good enough to share his method through a program he developed, called 'Reaction Training'.

"I've coached over 4000 students this year, as well as coaches for sports like netball

and rugby. I teach them how to get the most out of their athletes. It's mainly a lot of skills from martial arts," he says.

Demonstration of an outlandish feat of skill and reflex is a means for convincing students of both the value and veracity of his system.

"If you demonstrate the extreme, you can then bring it back to reality to enhance people's technique and skill. I can open and close my hand easily 85 times in five seconds. Doing that, the hand would strobe. I think anyone would be able to see the value of that specific skill. For instance, it's good for gripping a ball in netball."

Kelly's hyper-developed reflexes and the fact he's still able to push their limits in middle age is perhaps not surprising when you consider his training has been consistently engineered to capitalise on his genetic gifts. However, he also puts some stock in his odd diet — even though the average dietitian would likely consider it the more dangerous part of his life, or at least on par with the arrow caper. Opting for high protein and starchy carbohydrates, Kelly hasn't eaten a vegetable, other than potatoes, for as long as he can remember. His lean figure is the product of eating the old Irish favourite along with rice and meat, and perhaps the occasional chocolate treat.

Kelly is undoubtedly a unique specimen, much like the heroes he grew up with, such as Bruce Lee and Muhammad Ali. They were athletes who went beyond being remarkable for their unique skill, though; they made their disciplines into vehicles for their humanity. What attracted Kelly to them way back when is now apparent in Kelly's own persona.

"I want to show that we're normal people who are trying to be the best we can be," he muses. "I'm trying to change the perception of what martial arts has to offer, and that's my

reason for pursuing records. It shows people that if you pursue things, they are achievable.

"I'm 51, and I'm doing things like catching tennis balls travelling at over 200 kilometres per hour. I do it through a belief in myself and a commitment to pushing my body and mind. I practise those things through martial arts training."

Kelly's primary arts — the ones he teaches — are related forms of Chinese kung fu.

"I teach a style called Hung Kuen, which is the 'masculine style'; Wing Chun is actually the female, and I am also an instructor in that. I teach wushu forms, spear, broad sword, that sort of thing. For my own 200 students that I teach every week, my focus is to help them be as fast and strong as they can be for any sport they want to play."

For Kelly, catching arrows was a logical progression from breaking boards.

"[Breaking] got me into arrow catching, would you believe?" he says. "Through my research, I found old books to do with *dim mak*, or pressure-point fighting. It explores candle punching, board breaking and paper training. You've got three swinging boards, and you can choose to break the first or the second or the third depending on how you hit the first one."

Within the complex, esoteric skill is a simple, practical principle, he says. "It's to do with the transfer of energy through matter; you can see that it's possible. That makes you ask the question: where is the line between possible and impossible?"

It's a line that Kelly has spent some time traversing, his movements often charted by Guinness World Records. Most of those experiments have begun with that simple, deceptively innocuous question, 'What if?' He finds his answers through the perennial virtues of the martial arts: persistence, hard training and refining simple skills towards the ultimate outcome. ■

Fellow world record holders Glenn and Summerly Coxon watch Kelly's speed-catching attempt before their own board-breaking event



BETTER BREAKS AND PERFECT POOMSAE



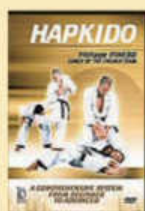
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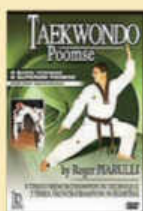
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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH MARK SALOYEDOFF



Defence against a sucker punch: Karate & Tai Chi

MARK SALOYEDOFF

Mark Saloyedoff has been practising martial arts for more than 30 years. He started his training in the UK under Sensei Peter Whitney (7th Dan) of the Higashi Karate Kai, where he trained to Black-belt level. Saloyedoff was very active on the UK tournament scene during the late 1970s and '80s, placing in many traditional karate and open-style competitions, including winning three open-weight national association championships.

Mentored by Madam Eng Choo Eng — World Wushu Championship medallist and coach of Singapore's wushu team — Saloyedoff also practises Yang-style tai chi and tai chi sword forms. He also spent over three years in private training with Sifu Ku Choi Wah in Ban Chung Cho Gar Wing Chun kung fu in Singapore.

Saloyedoff now owns and teaches at The Vale Studio in the NSW Southern Highlands near Sydney, a specialist venue where martial arts clubs hold their own special events and master classes.

Q&A Mark, how has your martial arts training changed you?

My training started very early in life, but I can still appreciate how different I may have been without martial arts. My early years were spent in a testing environment and I felt a need to gain self-worth and command respect; I was hooked on kumite competition and I also embraced the ethos of finding techniques that worked for you in fighting, regardless of style. As a result, my training was fairly one-dimensional: fighting, sparring and conditioning. I wouldn't say I had no interest in the more subtle aspects of the arts, but I gave little time to them. I now believe that was a mistake that made me rather ignorant of the benefits of a more balanced approach.

As I've matured, I've invested in mind and spirit through passive and active meditation. This involves the fusion of yoga and tai chi techniques along with aspects of my martial arts. Through this I've devised a Proactive Wellbeing System, which complements my martial arts training. I believe this has brought a maturity to my training that has enabled me to enjoy and actually get better at aspects of my training as I progress into my fifties.



1 In this scenario, Saloyedoff attempts to defuse a potentially violent situation, projecting a neutral and calm posture while maintaining his distance and a foundation of fluid balance.



2 An attack is launched without warning but thanks to Saloyedoff's maintenance of good distance, there is enough time for him to drop his centre of gravity and cover while driving into the attacker...



3 ...slipping under the attack and stepping in at an angle to deliver a strong elbow and/or forearm strike across the opponent's ribs.



4 Maintaining momentum, Saloyedoff continues through and behind the attacker, and fires a second elbow back into the floating ribs...



5 ...then strikes again as he turns out into a fighting stance behind the attacker...



6 ...putting him in position to follow up or escape as necessary. (Note that the key to this sequence is breaking the fighting line and countering in a continuous, fluid motion.)

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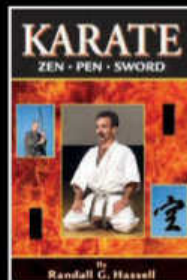
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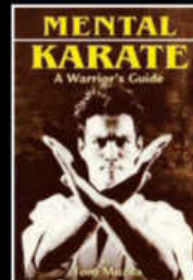


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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH JACK LEUNG



Defence against a left hook:

Practical Wing Chun

JACK LEUNG

Before moving to Australia, Jack Leung trained and competed in Goju-ryu karate in Hong Kong. He also trained in muay Thai and several different lineages of Southern Praying Mantis, including Chow Gar and Jook Lum Tong Long.

"I was fortunate enough to meet Grandmaster Wan Kam Leung in 1996 and I started training at the Ving Tsun Association," says Leung. "[Grandmaster Wan's] Practical Wing Chun is a close-range combat and self-defence system that does not pit force against force. It's the same system the Royal Hong Kong Police G4 VIP Protection Unit practise."

In 2013, Leung was granted his instructor certificate and awarded the title of *sifu* (teacher).

Sifu Leung is now a regional director for Practical Wing Chun Australia and teaches at three Practical Wing Chun schools in Queensland: the Underwood and Woolloongabba PWC branches in Brisbane, and at Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast. He is also the founder and chief instructor of the Griffith University Practical Wing Chun Club.

Q&A An aggressor has bailed you up suddenly and he's spitting expletives at you, and quickly and aggressively rapidly encroaching into your personal space — what goes through your head and what comes out of your mouth?

The first thing that goes through my head is awareness, as in I'll quickly work out what's happening — where and what is the threat? If the aggressor is coming towards you, what does he want? Scan through him and see if the aggressor has a weapon or any mates around. The last thing you want is instead of dealing with one aggressor spitting at you, to now have two or more people trying to assault you. At the same time I would be putting my two palms out in a defensive mode, facing the aggressor and trying to use my 'verbal Wing Chun' to defuse the situation (talk the aggressor down from physically assaulting). The two palms are also my guard so I can react when the situation escalates. I'll keep checking the surroundings to make sure [my position] is in my favour. Ask, is there an exit plan? Can you run away and leave the scene?

All of the above analysis and action must be executed within seconds. This is what I teach my students with our real-life scenarios in class, to pressure them so they can test their kung fu realistically against modern-day assault situations.



1 Sifu Leung has his face and torso covered as he converses with an aggressor.



2 As the aggressor loads and launches his left hook, Leung reacts with a *tiu*...



3 ...extending his right hand into the biceps of the aggressor to jam the hook as his left hand launches forward on his centerline...



4 ...seeking the attacker's rear arm (or to strike if the way is clear). Sifu Leung controls his foe's rear hand as he brings the other down...

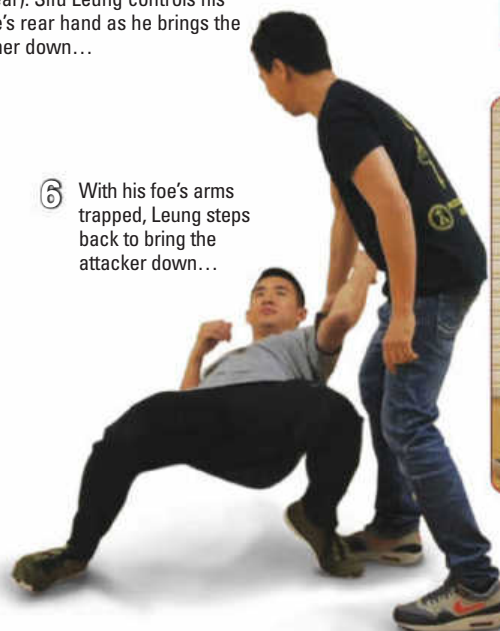


5 ...and levers the elbow up to cross it under his attacker's top hand and take him off balance.



5a

6 With his foe's arms trapped, Leung steps back to bring the attacker down...



7 ...and ends the altercation with a kick into the attacker's ribs.



Why does David Hart of Dominance MMA think that **PaySmart direct debit billing** is so critical to his cash flow?

David Hart
Director of Dominance Mixed Martial Arts

"My benchmark is cash flow and PaySmart saves us the time and headaches associated with collecting student payments. To run a martial arts academy, a direct debit company is essential. PaySmart is the only direct debit company we trust to do this. Dominance has been operating for 10 years, and PaySmart has been an integral part of our growth. Their online functionality, WebExpress, is so concise and easy to use allowing us to manage the students accounts with a few clicks." PaySmart's 10 Benchmarks of Direct Debit Billing* enable you to make an informed decision. Contact us for more information on how PaySmart can help with the cash flow of your business, or for an obligation-free Benchmark Comparison to any other billings provider.

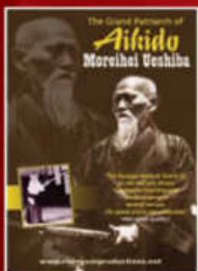
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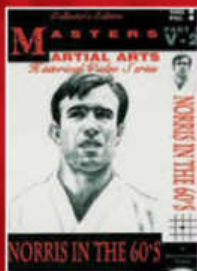
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TECHNIQUE WORKSHOP WITH ALEX VOUVARIS



Defence against a left hook: Taekwondo

ALEX VOUVARIS

Alex Vouvaris holds a 4th Degree Black-belt under the International Taekwon-do Federation and runs the Vouvaris Taekwon Do club in Port Melbourne, Victoria. Vouvaris has trained for more than 27 years under his father, Master Con Vouvaris, 8th Degree (formerly with Rhee Taekwondo Melbourne up to 3rd Degree, then under Master Yeo Hui of Chong Do Taekwondo, Hong Kong) and has also trained with his uncles Paschali Karadimos (Pan Australia Karadimos Taekwondo) and George Karyotakis (Freestyle Taekwondo), both early pioneers of ITF-style taekwondo in Melbourne. He now teaches under Master Michael Muleta, 8th Degree and president of United ITF.

Vouvaris has won numerous sparring and breaking titles in state and national championships, and was a member of the Australian ITF team that competed at the 2014 World Championships in Rome, Italy. He has also trained in muay Thai, Brazilian jiu-jitsu and boxing.

Q&A Alex, how has your martial arts training changed you?

In many ways, I must say. The tenets of taekwondo — which are courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit — are the key factors I have taken from the art, and encompass what I have gained from it. It has taught me to respect myself and to respect others coming from any race, age and denomination. It has built in me strength and confidence to deal with everyday life, not to fear anything and to keep moving forward to better myself. It has given me a strong sense of self-control, which has helped me with my family, friends, work and relationships over the years. It has taught me to never give up and to fight for what I believe and do what I want to do.

Taekwondo has also opened up many opportunities to meet new people locally and around the world. Teaching students is another aspect of taekwondo that I find very rewarding. Keeping fit and healthy is an integral part of taekwondo training, which also connects you with healthy lifestyle choices, including choosing to eat fresh and healthy food.

All in all, taekwondo training has kept me in line to reach my goals. It is a 'pillar' in my life that keeps me motivated, excited and happy to progress with life and deal with everything that comes with it.



When an aggressor confronts him, Vouvaris keeps an eye on his opponent's hands and movements...



...and raises his hands as his opponent does, catching his opponent's attempted left hook using the backhand (*sondung*)...



...as he steps to the outside to jam the attacker's arm and overwrap it, trapping it under his armpit and turning his opponent.



Before his attacker can come back with a right hand, Vouvaris cuts him off with a headbutt to the nose while pulling the attacker closer...



...then steps up and knees the attacker in the groin, still controlling both arms.



Vouvaris then slams the side of his attacker's head with a palm as he applies a sweeping kick (*suroh chagi*) to the near leg while pulling on the arm to bring his foe down...



...and finishes off by dropping his knee onto the attacker's head and striking his ribs (repeatedly if necessary) with a middle-knuckle punch (*joongji joomuk*).

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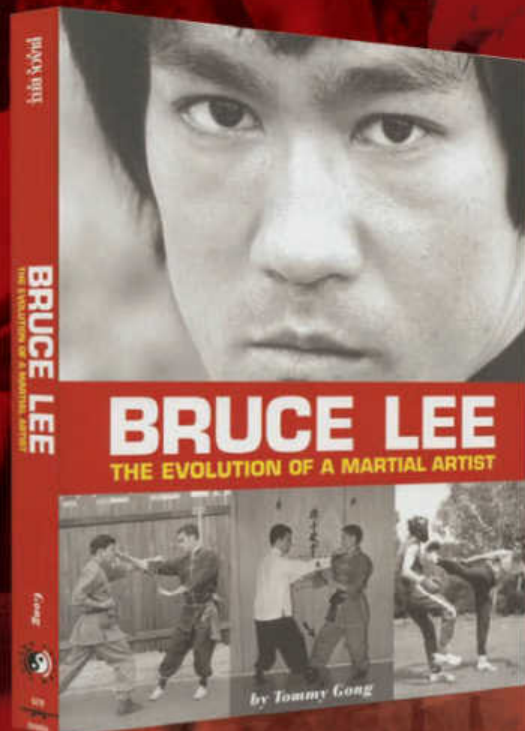
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you'll know I'M LYING!



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Ask the Doc

Ringside physician Dr Peter Lewis answers some of the common questions asked by fighters and martial artists.

What is your opinion regarding fighting with headgear versus no headgear?

This raises two of the most controversial questions in the sports of boxing and kickboxing today.

There is a presumption that helmets make the sport safer and that is why they are compulsory in the amateurs. This is not the case. This was discussed at length at the WBC Convention on boxing injuries in Aruba. In reality, the reason for headgear in the amateurs is more political — it's to distinguish themselves from the pros, and because in some countries, such as England, where the British Medical Association is very active in its calls to ban boxing, it is thought that the use of headgear is more acceptable.

Many people believe that more protective gear means a safer sport. Gridiron proves this wrong. There have also been some studies on the effects of bicycle helmets and road safety that show they have almost no direct effect on head injuries.

Wearing headgear in fighting does reduce cuts and I would recommend it for a fighter in the fortnight before a fight just to prevent being cut.

The problems with headgear are:

- It creates a false sense of confidence. Fighters wear the blow instead of blocking or weaving.

- It makes the head target bigger, so it is harder to weave out of the way of a shot.
- It makes the head target heavier and therefore slower to move to weave; therefore people do not bother to move the head and become lazy. This becomes a habit.
- Because the head target is larger and slower to move, it becomes an easy scoring option. This has meant that amateur boxing has now become dominated by headshots and the art of the body shot has been lost, which has made head trauma more common in boxing and I think has made boxing less interesting, as I am a big fan of the body shot.
- Headgear reduces vision. You can 'close your eyes' and wear the blow.
- Headgear can cause overheating of the head, which contributes to dehydration and reduced mental clarity.

One of my favourite sayings is "Pad the weapon and not the target." I believe that the key issue is design of boxing gloves. There should be excellent padding across the knuckles. Unfortunately, gloves are rated according to their weight. There is a presumption that heavier gloves have more padding on the knuckles. This is often just plain wrong, especially with older gloves, which are sometimes really heavy and have no knuckle protection. I spar with 10oz gloves with excellent knuckle

protection, and I like my partners to do the same. This encourages fast, quick shots without the wind-up and follow through.

The thing that causes the most brain damage is repeated blows rather than an occasional sharp blow. I think the best way to really shake the head up is to put headgear on and then pound that head repeatedly with 16oz gloves.

What is your opinion on the state of drug testing in our sport and what direction should we be heading?

Well, I am a bit biased when it comes to drug testing because I am a director of Suretest, which supplies drug testing cups for many sporting events, including motorbike races and world title boxing and kickboxing.

The obvious advantage of testing is that we can promote the sport as safer and cleaner and more politically correct. I think it is important for fighter safety that they are not using stimulant drugs that impair judgment. This is for the safety of both fighters.

There are problems with drug testing. The main one is cost. There is no way that we could afford to test for every drug for every fighter. Because we can only test for some drugs, the effect of testing means that we will only catch out the ignorant and poor drug users. Pro athletes with expensive sports scientists behind them can always get around the tests.

The biggest problem with drug testing is that the very existence of the testing program implies that fighters have an unfair advantage if they are using drugs and I am not sure that that is the case. Some young people will think that if we test for drugs, they must work and therefore they will try them out because they'll do anything to win.

I think that we need a drug education campaign in conjunction with testing to make it quite clear that we test to ensure fighter safety and that drugs do not give the fighter an advantage. Most good fighters do not use drugs. They are fit, they train hard and they have good skills. Many of the fighters who use drugs are lazy and they lose.

A problem with drug testing can also be seen in the Soliman/ Sturm controversy where Sam Soliman was vilified because the Germans alleged that they had detected a trace amount of methylsynephrine in Sam's urine. Methylsynephrine is also known as citrus extract and it is present in many over-the-counter nutritional supplements. This is clearly the case of drug testing gone mad. Drug testing should be first about fighter safety. Secondly to prevent unfair cheating, but as I said above, I am not sure that we can achieve this. Drug testing has gone mad when it comes down to testing for obscure supplements that you can get in health food shops and when it gets to an AFLtype situation where even the experts are arguing about which supplements are legal and which are not. ■

DR PETER LEWIS

Dr Lewis is internationally recognised as a medical authority in the martial arts field. He has consulted at ReCreation Medical Centre and Malvern Martial Arts Centre in Melbourne for almost 30 years, and has also been studying and teaching martial arts for nearly 40 years. Best known as a ringside physician, Dr Lewis has worked in 28 cities internationally, 22 of these on world-title standard events, and has competed in karate, taekwondo and kung fu.

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DRILL IT WITH PAUL ZADRO



Learn How to Ricochet

This two-man drill from kempo karate master Paul Zadro teaches you to strike your way out of multiple-opponent situations with power and accuracy.

THE EXPERT

The name Paul Zadro has long been synonymous with martial arts in Sydney for over 30 years. With a base in kempo karate, Zadro has done it all, from professional kickboxing to shootfighting during the art's early days. Perhaps best known for his time as head instructor at the International Martial Arts Centre, Zadro and IMC have the unique distinction of being the oldest martial arts school in Australia to operate out of the same location with the same instructor. Starting in taekwondo, Zadro shifted his focus to kempo karate after receiving his Black-belt. Coming up the ranks, Zadro was among the first Australian martial artists to regularly travel overseas to compete and train. His travels took him to various parts of the globe in search of the best competition and instruction.

THE DRILL

This drill is called 'ricochet' and is one of 38 self-defence routines taught under kempo's Black-belt syllabus. It is simple, it uses many of the kempo principles and it works, even if you screw up part of it.

The scenario it trains you for is this: there are two guys standing in front of you, talking and posturing in an aggressive manner. Since their intentions to do you harm are obvious, you take the first strike option (always recommended where escape options are out and attempts

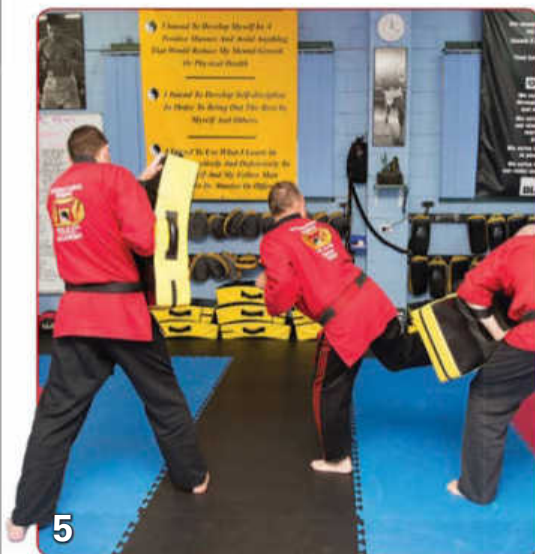
PAD DRILL: TWO-MAN RICOCHET



To begin the drill, you must have two partners holding kick shields stand and face you on your left and right flank.



Beginning on either side, drive forward into one opponent and deliver a palm-strike through the shield, aiming for maximum penetration...



The first opponent must then hold his shield low so as to absorb your spinning back/hook-kick (note the bend in the leg on impact to allow for follow-through)...



...then he'll use it to cover up high so you can follow your kicking momentum through into a back-fist or elbow, etc.

to verbally defuse things have been exhausted).

To set up the drill, all you need are two kick shields and two people to hold them. This drill is always fun because

you can be as aggressive and forceful as you want without anybody getting hurt. The drill sequence goes as follows: palm-heel strike the first shield, then use that energy

to 'bounce' the same hand across into the second shield with a back-fist strike. Next, immediately spin back toward the first shield to deliver a spinning back-kick to the groin (ensure your partner knows where to hold the shield!), followed by a back-fist to the top of the first shield (representing the head of the first opponent). Finally, finish

your combination with a back-kick to the second shield (your opponent should be moving in on you). Once complete, the person who has just executed the technique takes over one of the shields and one of the original shield-holders performs the same routine. The idea is to rotate the shields between three people, giving everyone a go. ■

This drill is always fun because you can be as aggressive and forceful as you want without anybody getting hurt.



...then immediately drive back off your front foot to 'ricochet' across to the second shield, striking it hard with a back-fist or similar...



...and follow through with a rear-hand power strike of choice, such as a palm-heel to jaw level.



Immediately ricochet back to the second opponent, delivering a mid- or high-level back/side-kick to the shield...



...then retreat quickly to a 'safe' distance, facing both opponents. The striker then takes a shield and one of the pad holders becomes the striker.

THE BURN WITH MATT BEECROFT



Row, Row, Row Your Bar

Rows are the most underrated exercise for martial artists and if you don't have them in your program, you should.



PHOTO: MICHAEL NEVEUX; MODEL: ELI BLAHUT

The last two articles have focused on how to treat your shoulder problems, so I thought it only fair to follow up with an article on a strength exercise that will really help with your shoulder health and also have a great crossover strength-wise to your deadlift and other pulls.

The row comes in a variety of forms: inverted rows (probably the only exercise for which a Smith machine bar is useful, besides throwing your towel over), barbell and dumbbell rows, seated machine row variations, Pendlay rows (named after Olympic weightlifting coach Glenn Pendlay), Yates rows (named after former Mr Olympia Dorian Yates), supported bench rows (think

lying on a bench and rowing, which takes all momentum out of the row) and other variants such as the T-bar, hex and cambered bar, and resistance-band rows.

While we don't have the scope to cover all the technique here, we can cover the key things to watch out for with your form. But let's first discuss why you should be rowing in your strength workouts for martial arts and MMA, and how to program them.

If you think about the nature of martial arts practice, it's clear that our shoulders do a lot of internal rotation (turning in) and protraction (coming forward) with all the striking, pushing and other things we do in front of the

body (on the sagittal plane). Clever strength coaches know that part of training MA and MMA athletes is to keep their bodies healthy by training the functional opposite movements to those things they do repetitively in training. This way they balance out the body by reversing the effects of specialising in a sport that focuses on particular movements, as most do. For martial artists, the row is therefore the perfect exercise for this purpose, since its focus is scapula retraction and, depending on the variant, some external rotation — although we must use correct technique whereby the shoulders don't come up to the ears (so we avoid elevation).

Secondly, if we also look at the computer/desk posture and combine that with some striking in a hunchback-like posture (aka 'fighter's posture'), which together keep the body in a constant state of flexion, it's clear that this is a path to disaster for our shoulders. The computer or hunchback posture has us not only stiff through our thoracic spine (see my last article to help fix that), but our rhomboid muscles in between our shoulder blades are constantly in a lengthened state. It's like an elastic band being at full stretch all the time: the band isn't going to bounce back quickly because it's lost its natural resting length. If your shoulder blades lose their ability to retract well or



function well generally, this will likely lead to shoulder problems. But the good old row gets that retraction happening and wakes up those rhomboids.

Mondays and Fridays/Saturdays at the gym are generally international bench and biceps day, the staple of which, of course, is lots of variations in bench pressing. But when it comes to 'back day', the row — which is the functional opposite of the bench press — doesn't get nearly as much love as its anterior partner. So, in regards to balancing out the scapula on the horizontal plane for pushing and pulling, let's have a look at how load, volume and exercise order can play a big role in your shoulder woes.

For example, let's say the first exercise on a lifter's chest or upper-body day/program is bench press, so it's done when he is fresh, and he can do three sets of 10 reps pressing 100 kilograms (just to make the math easy to understand). So, 3 x 100 kg for 10 sets is equivalent to 3000 kg or three tonne of volume of pushing. If we then went to your back day or 'pull' program, I can guarantee most lifters do not have

heavy rows as their first exercise (it's usually pull-ups or something else). I could also guess that most people's barbell bent-over row numbers aren't as good as their bench press numbers. Let's say, for example, that you could do three sets of 80 kilograms for 10 reps (again to make the math easy): 3 x 80 x 10 is 2400 kilograms. That is a whopping 600 kilograms less in volume! Not only this but the bench press is not usually the only bench-pressing variation done — most people then throw in incline and decline variations too, and then don't balance that out with the same volume in rowing variations. Are you starting to see the problem? The load and volume isn't there to balance the scapula.

So here are the definitive do's and don'ts of rowing...

DO THIS:

- Perform rows first in your program while you are fresh, and train your weaknesses first if you know that your horizontal pull is weaker than your press, if your volume is much larger on your horizontal push or

if your shoulders aren't feeling great.

- Include a variety of rowing in your program if you also have a variety of pushing.

- While many powerlifters swear by the bent-over row and rowing variations and how it assists their deadlift numbers, do avoid doing really heavy deadlifts and heavy, unsupported rows like a bent-over row on the same day, as it can place a very large strain on the lower back. If you wish to include heavy deadlifts and rows in the same workout, a supported row, lying face down on a bench to take the lower back out of the equation, may in fact be a much better option to preserve your lower back for more important things that day...like, you know, walking and stuff.

- Stretch out your pecs for a while before you row. It will help you get a better contraction by stretching out the area that often opposes the movement.

- Change your grip to not only challenge your back and scapula differently but to avoid elbow problems.

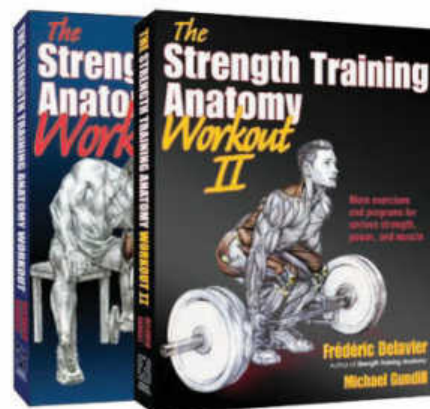
- Focus on your pulling action to target your mid



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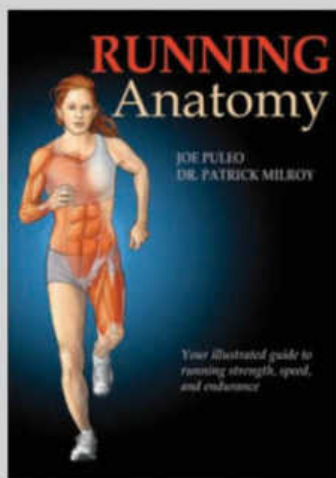
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THE BURN WITH MATT BEECROFT

back, not your biceps. You want to see shoulder retraction, shoulder extension and elbow flexion happen together in your technique.

- Keep your spine straight and neutral or even slightly extended. Studies and work from Dr Stuart McGill (one of the world's leading authorities on back pain) show that you are much stronger in a slightly extended position. That also includes your neck; keep it long and straight and avoid reaching forward and up with your neck or going 'pigeon style' as you row in.

DON'T DO THIS:

- Over-cue the squeezing of the shoulder blades: There are many trainers who talk about squeezing the shoulder blades at the end of the row. This is sort of correct, but the cuing depends on the client. Incorrect cuing can change the correct timing and sequencing of shoulder blade retraction, so you need to be careful with your cuing. If a client is unable to do this, then this is the only time I cue this by placing my finger in between the shoulder blade and asking them to squeeze it at the very end of the motion.

- Go too heavy: Work for activation, not ego. I see a lot of gym-goers who 'cheat row' by using a lot of jerking and momentum that's unhealthy for the neck and spine, and misses the benefit of doing the row. Yes, you need to go heavy to get growth but you also need to get the correct activation of the muscles you are meant to be engaging in the lift. That doesn't happen if you aren't properly targeting these areas and are working everything else instead.

- Row too upright or use a lot of momentum. Avoid



The body is too upright with shoulders elevated and anterior humeral glide (out of the alignment and a healthy position, protruding forward and up)



Variation two with the back flexed and neck in 'pigeon' position



Rowing in the correct line



The anterior humeral glide: you can see the poor shoulder position

flaring your elbows out to the side. This also happens if you go too heavy.

- Let your shoulders come up as you row in (elevate) or let them come out of the socket and 'disconnect' from the rest of the body at the bottom of the row. Especially for a shoulder that is already niggly, putting it into a poor

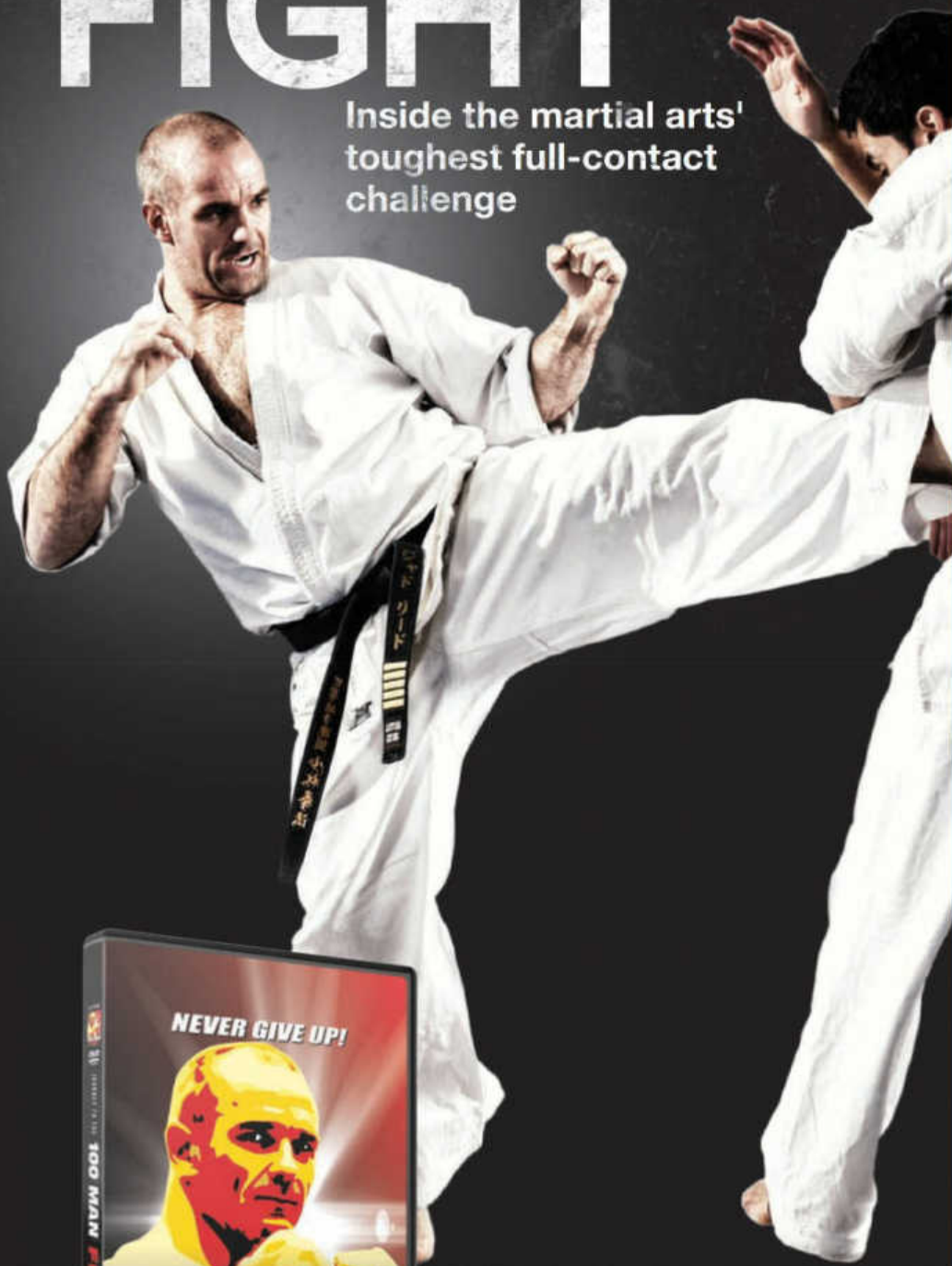
position or reinforcing a dysfunctional movement pattern (like shrugging the shoulders up to the ears) isn't going to be helpful.

- Execute the movement with anterior humeral glide (that is, shoulders out of alignment and protruding forward and up, as above) — it's bad for your joints. ■

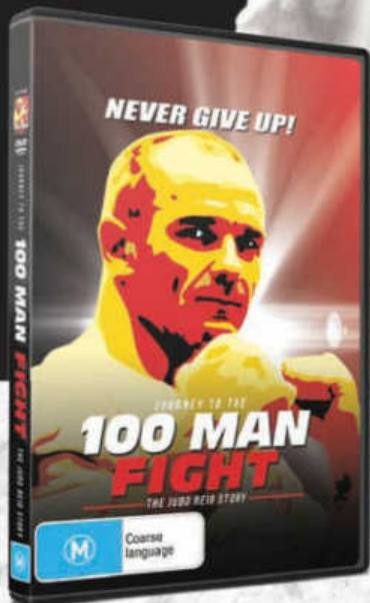
Matt Beecroft is an RKC Team Leader and Functional Movement System-certified strength coach with over 13 years' experience as a trainer. He's an Expert Level krav maga instructor, nationally accredited boxing coach and national fitness presenter. He also coaches amateur and professional muay Thai fighters. He can be contacted via his website www.realitysdc.com.au

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Laughing ALL THE WAY TO THE BRAWL

Comedy, systema and how to prevail in a street fight

Comedian Michael Workman discovered a need for self-protection skills around the same time he discovered that alcoholism is not an antidote to depression, and that exercise might just be the key to his survival. Now an instructor at Sydney Systema under Justin Ho, Workman reveals how fulfilling that need changed his life — both before and after he survived his first street fight.

STORY BY MICHAEL WORKMAN

I spend my nights yelling at large groups of people about my opinions, and then someone hands me money and I go home. I am a professional stand-up. Stand-up comedy is probably the best job in the world. It affords me a lot of free time during the day, and since I quite publicly shoot my mouth off, I thought it might be prudent to spend some of that time learning to defend myself. That's how I stumbled across systema — or simply, 'the system'.

I'll be honest, I'm flawed and I'm insecure, and when

I came to martial arts, a large part of the attraction was having power over others. I wanted to be a badass who could back up his big mouth when it came down to it, and for that I'm a little embarrassed now. I think a lot of people are attracted to martial arts because they are damaged and riddled with self-doubt or fear, and the ability to control others through any number of cool moves is in extension an attempt to control yourself. I was definitely that guy.

When I started comedy I was severely depressed,

alcoholic, and totally out of control. I had ruined every meaningful relationship in my life (which made for great material, but kinda sucked for happiness) and I was acutely broke. In the comedy industry, alcohol is part of any standard rider, so not long into my career, things got worse — but they got worse for free, so I guess that's a win?

My depression eventually became unmanageable and a friend suggested regular exercise to get some semblance of health back.

Now, I don't really believe



JAMES WALKER



in exercise for the sake of exercise. I would never swim just because I can, nor would I hike, and I really don't think I should ever wear Lycra. I hate gyms, because people tend to look at you funny if you choose to eat a burrito on the treadmill. I knew that in order to fool myself into exercise, I would have to package it in the form of acquiring a skill. I could have just as easily chosen ballroom dancing if it weren't for my desire to be a badass, so instead I chose Russian systema.

I came home from my first class bruised and very sore. I had been punched, kicked, stabbed, strangled and generally abused physically and psychologically. I didn't like the process, but I liked the results, because as an unintended consequence of striving for badassery, something else happened: I felt like I had just done something real for the first time in years. I was hurt, I was too sore to move, but I was present, a feeling I realised I had missed through years of substance dependency.

As time went on, the desire to prove how tough I was and how much arse I could kick was slowly beaten out of me, and what replaced it was a sense of quiet self-confidence. I found myself walking on stage without fear, ready to accept any possibility, and this freed up my mind to take on new ideas and challenges — my stand-up improved dramatically. On top of that, my personal interactions were no longer scary and my anxiety virtually disappeared. I was hooked, and since I had the time, I began training 15 hours

**I FELT LIKE I
HAD JUST DONE
SOMETHING REAL
FOR THE FIRST
TIME IN YEARS.”**

a week and eventually became a teacher myself.

It is ironic, I suppose, that after all that humility and conditioning removed my desire to be a tough guy, I was eventually put in a position where I had to use my training in real life. I often think how much worse the situation would have been if I were still that angry young man I was at the start of my training, and how messy things could have become.

It was a Friday night on tour, I had just done a show, and people were spilling out onto the streets. I don't know if they knew me, but two men started pestering and yelling at me. They approached together and I could see from their body language they were about to grab me. If I were still desperate to be a tough guy, would I have cracked their skulls? Broken their bones? I don't know, but that quiet self-confidence conditioned into me took over and said, 'Be kind.'

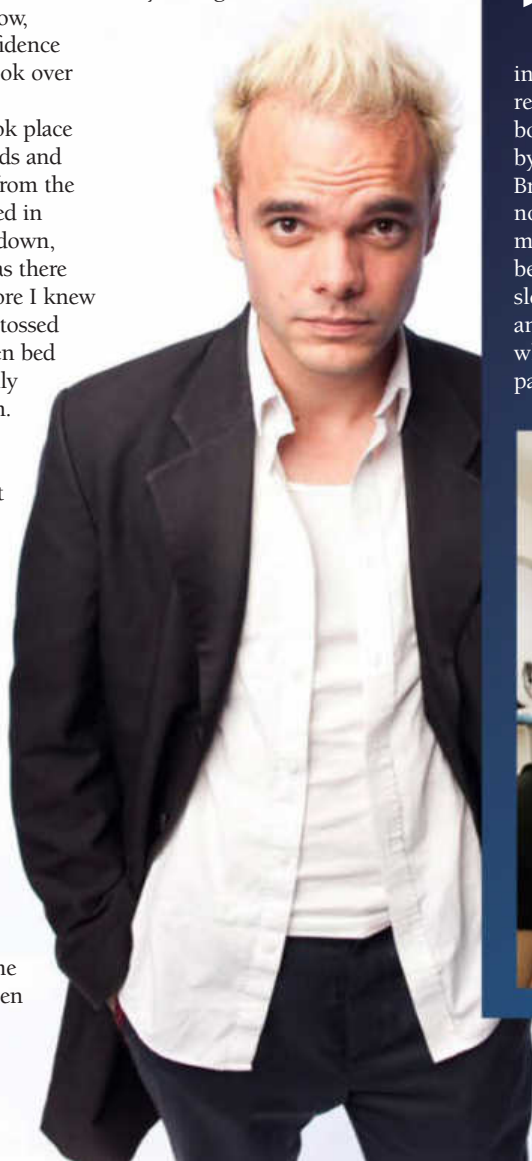
The 'scuffle' that took place lasted about two seconds and was indistinguishable from the things I had experienced in training. Time slowed down, everything I needed was there for the taking, and before I knew it, one of the men was tossed harmlessly into a garden bed and the other was totally subdued under my arm. I didn't have to throw a punch.

I learned a lot about myself from that incident, and others like it. Systema didn't magically cure my addictions, or fix my past, but it did give me the tools I needed to deal with it. Systema stopped me from becoming aggressive in stressful situations and, in turn, stopped me from focusing that aggression inward. An encounter that in my past would have become a messy struggle between

three maniacs on the street was instead as calm and banal as buttering toast.

The idea of a fight is something of an illusion. Every conflict is really just an attempt to turn chaos into order. When I walk on stage to yell at strangers, or deal with internal conflict, or handle street violence, the most important thing systema has instilled in me is the ability to find calmness. In all of my trials in my personal, professional and public lives, there is this invaluable tool of acceptance that I found through systema training.

The man who wanted to be a badass is gone, and that feels pretty good. A great martial art will develop the practitioner into a better person, in mind and body. I look forward to what that will bring well into my old age.



How to Prevail in a Street Fight

BY MICHAEL WORKMAN

Whether you're like me and shoot your mouth off for a living, or you simply hate running (again, like me — it's so unbecoming), knowing how to protect yourself is vital when words come to push and push comes to shove. The ancient Russian martial art of systema could be described as being among the most effective but also most humane martial arts in the world, and these are its core principles for surviving a physical confrontation, be it on the street or anywhere else:

1 Relax. The most difficult but most important thing to do in a high-stress situation is to remain calm and relax your body. You can achieve this by regulating your breathing. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, trying to fill your belly with breath. This will slow the release of adrenaline and decrease muscle tension, which can cause fear and paralysis and make you an

easy target. When opponents attack, they instinctively go for still or solid targets, because they know that resistance will deliver the most damage. Breathe, relax and keep moving; this will minimise the effectiveness of their strikes and make it easier for you to strike back.

2 Don't Block. I know this sounds counterintuitive, but blocking is one of the worst



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things you can do. When someone attacks you, they expect one of three possible outcomes: either they hit their target, indicating they should keep doing what they're doing; they miss their target, indicating they should try again; or they are blocked, which immediately sends the signal they should try harder. You don't want them to try harder — that's bad. Instead, building on the notion of 'relaxed movement', you should 'fend' or redirect the attack. This is very confusing to the opponent(s) because none of the outcomes they expected have occurred. Typically it will take longer to figure out what has gone wrong, which you can use to your advantage.

3 Hit Everything You See with Everything You Have. A person can understand being hit in one or two places at once, but a bombardment of strikes from all angles is very difficult to deal with. The brain overloads when it tries

to defend too many angles at once, and the opponent becomes susceptible to effortless takedowns. You don't have to be a heavy hitter, just as long as the brain recognises that multiple attacks are happening, it will redirect energy away from simple motor functions such as standing up. Try it on your friends — they'll think it's hilarious.

4 Move from the Body. In a street fight, it is sometimes impossible to tell whether the opponent has a weapon. What you thought was a punch is actually a strange stinging sensation, and too late — you notice the knife. Train your body to move out of the trajectory of attack. Take your whole body off the line of danger if possible. It's one thing to redirect or stop a blade with the arms, but if you miss, the main target is still there, ready for a new navel to be installed. One of the happy side effects of learning to free the body for

movement is that you will find yourself naturally falling into very advantageous positions. By escaping the trajectory of attack, opportunities will suddenly appear out of the blue and once that happens, refer to point #3.

5 Don't Punch People in the Mouth. Is this guy crazy? Yes. Crazy like a fox. It's fine to punch people in the mouth in the Octagon, but not on the street. In the ring, people have mouth guards and hand protection, but on the street, you have nothing. When you punch people in the mouth, what typically happens is their teeth break. When teeth break they become sharp and, almost invariably, they cut your fist open. Now your fist is cut open and full of some jacked-up meth-head's blood. Good luck with that. To avoid disease, try to punch the fleshier areas of the head: the side of the face and the jaw. Even under the best circumstances, bacteria in the mouth can cause sepsis and all kinds of nasty stuff. Punch the mouth and you may win the fight, but you might not like the test results.

6 Don't Resist Going to the Ground. There is nothing wrong with going to the ground. You can be just as effective there as anywhere. If you are thrown to the ground, or knocked there, keep moving. Don't stay still. What tends

to happen when you hit the ground is that attackers will begin kicking and stomping you, so don't be an easy target! Keep moving and keep calm.

7 Focus on Attack, not to be cruel or malicious, but to 'introvert' your opponent. If you spend too much energy on defence, you are merely buying your opponent(s) more opportunities to pummel you. You need to give them problems. Through constant attack, the once-extroverted aggressor will suddenly see themselves as a victim and abandon further action. Of course, experienced fighters will have a higher tolerance for this than

“**YOU NEED TO MAKE THE ATTACKER INSTANTLY REGRET THEIR DECISION AND START LOOKING FOR AN OUT.**”

laypeople, but the effect affords all kinds of other tactics too. You need to make the attacker instantly regret their decision and start looking for an out. You can't do that with a bunch of fancy 'crouching tiger' stuff — you have to hit them. A lot.

8 You are Going to Get Hit. This one's pretty straightforward. No matter how good you are, no matter how much you know, there will always be a point where you zigged instead of zagged, and copped one in your pretty face. This doesn't mean you've failed and it definitely isn't a reason to stop. Try not to get angry and keep working. Good luck! ■



JAMES WALKER

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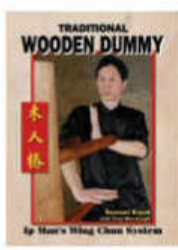
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A full-length photograph of Mark Kline, a middle-aged man with a shaved head and a goatee, standing in a red karate gi. He is wearing a red belt with 'A2U' written on it. His right arm is extended forward in a palm-down gesture. The gi has a 'Kaizen Martial Arts' logo on the left chest and a Japanese character patch on the right chest. The background is plain white.

KARATE PRESSURISED

Pressure-point combat expert Mark Kline

Seven years after taking up wrestling as a 12-year-old kid, Mark Kline began seeking something more; that thing to level the playing field for smaller guys like him. In search of self-defence skills, he took up Tang Soo Do but ultimately found that the sport karate he was learning did not give him all the answers. A chance discovery of the Japanese healing method of shiatsu later led Kline to kyusho-jitsu, the art of attacking pressure points on the body, and he also began training in jujitsu and arnis with America's top teachers of the time. Now an 8th Dan with Black-belts under some of the USA's renowned pioneers of martial arts, including the late Professor Wally Jay and Guro Remy Presas, Kline was recently in Australia teaching his PinPoint Method of kyusho-jitsu. He took time out to tell *Blitz* how it works.

INTERVIEW BY STEVEN TALEVSKI & BEN STONE



Mark, what were your driving goals in martial arts in your younger years?

I really wanted to learn self-defence because I was fascinated with how a smaller person can take out a larger person. This isn't a knock on Tang Soo Do, but there were some things I found missing in all martial arts until I separated my shoulder a couple of years later. This woman who owned a martial arts supply store asked me what happened to my arm. She asked if I wanted her to do shiatsu on it. I said, yeah, okay, why not? I was sort of thinking it wasn't going to work. I was in a lot of pain and I could barely move my arm — the doctor said I was going to be out of action for six to eight weeks. Within 20 minutes of her doing what she did to my shoulder, I was able to do full shoulder rotations and the swelling had gone down. My father was a doctor and the president of the local hospital. He said, "You can't do that (to your shoulder)." I said I couldn't do it earlier, but I can do it now. He asked what I did, and I told him. Back then, massage and alternative types of therapy were still considered

quackery by doctors. My father said, "Do you think she can fix my arm — I'm having this numbing feeling in my arm." I took him over and she fixed his arm too. He didn't know what to say.

She lent me four George Dillman videos that were released in the late 1980s. He didn't do a lot, but the stuff he did made sense. It resonated with me, because I had questions about the kata. I had questions about how I was going to defeat a larger attacker. That led me to where I am right now.

What has changed since then? Being that you're now an 8th Dan, are you still doing martial arts for the same reasons?

I'm not just doing it for myself; I do it to help other people because I see a lot of good martial arts out there. I think they can be better. One of my teachers was Wally Jay [Small Circle jujitsu founder]. Wally was all about increasing people's potential and helping people get better at what they do. I trained with Wally for a long time. I was actually the first person in the world to get individual Black-belts from George Dillman, Wally Jay and

Remy Presas [Modern Arnis founder].

You just mentioned three great martial arts masters. Who have been your primary direct teachers across your career?

Early on it was George Dillman, Wally Jay and Remy Presas. I trained directly with them and I travelled all over the country with seminars every weekend. They used to call me the ever-present Mark Kline. I was always there — they couldn't get away from me.

You are an expert in kyusho-jitsu. What made that element of the martial arts so attractive to you compared to the arts you'd practised before?

Kyusho-jitsu is like a bullet: you can have one, but when it just sits there it does absolutely nothing. You need a good delivery system, so the Tang Soo Do that I learned actually helped give a good delivery system. I worked with professional boxers and professional kickboxers while working with George Dillman, Wally Jay and Remy Presas. Remy actually did stick-fighting, so learning all of that

stuff and training with them gave me a very good delivery system; without it, I would have a bunch of knowledge to talk a good game but I couldn't do anything [in combat].

I feel a lot of people could tell you every acupuncture theory under the sun. But you ask them to demonstrate a technique and they may not be able to do it. To me, I don't care what you know — show me. Talk is cheap; I'd rather see people walk the walk. It doesn't mean they have to go out and beat people up, that's not what I'm talking about. If they say, this is how it works — great, show me, teach me, I'm more than willing to learn.

How important is it to understand the fundamentals of kata when practising kyusho-jitsu?

Some people call kata the essence of karate. I believe it shows the angle and direction of how to attack the points if you know what to look for. Every single move in kata was designed to be a real self-defence technique; there are no blocks in karate. All the movements in the kata aren't blocks. Look at sports such as rugby or baseball — every sport and every different

position has different footwork. No movement is wasted or else they wouldn't be able to play; it wouldn't work right. There is nothing wrong with the movements in the kata, it is just that the interpretation of it is incorrect, I believe. The way I break down kata is every single move is designed to hurt somebody — that's how I was taught.

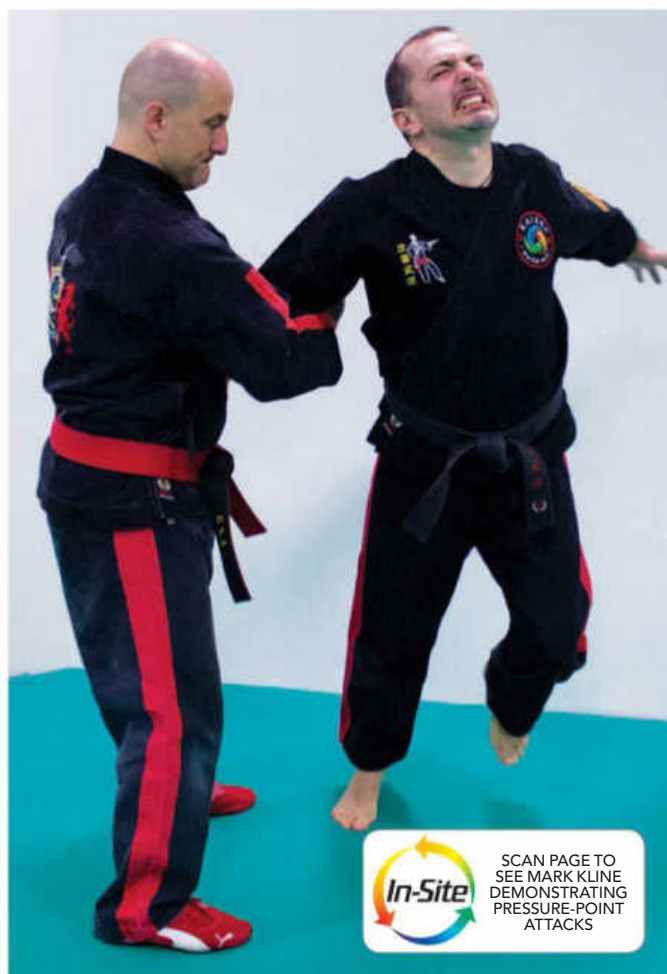
Why do you believe pressure-point striking is more effective than using other striking methods in martial arts?

If you are big and strong, you can punch someone in the face; you don't need pressure points. If you are a big guy, you don't need pressure points; but if you're small, you need it. If someone who is 100 kg is coming after me — I'm 5'6", 80 kg and 48 years old — for whatever reason, I need something that is different, as I can't match them with speed and strength. One thing I've realised is that my strength is different to what it was, and my speed is different to when I was younger. But I think I am a hell of a lot smarter now at getting the job done faster. So the pressure points are an equaliser because the opponent is not going to expect it, especially from somebody small.

Have you got any extreme stories of using kyusho-jitsu when you have been knocked out, or knocked out an opponent yourself?

I was talking to someone today, one of my online students. He was asking me how to do this in competition and I told him it's not for competition. When you are fighting someone who is prepared for you, this is hard to do, [but] for someone to come after you and you do it immediately, that would hopefully end the fight.

The last fight I was in was



"THE LAST FIGHT I WAS IN WAS EIGHT YEARS AGO. I TRY TO AVOID FIGHTS WHENEVER POSSIBLE. IT'S NOT WORTH IT."

eight years ago. I try to avoid fights whenever possible. It's not worth it. That doesn't mean I back down, but there are ways to talk your way out of it. The first line of defence is your brain. The guy started to move towards me, my left hand shot out and I hit him on a point called the mental nerve, on the chin, and he passed out. I did that with my left hand and I am right-handed. I was

like, wow! I wasn't surprised that it worked, I was surprised it was my left hand that was the one that shot out; but the way I train my students is that you are to attack the closest target with the closest weapon. I am right-handed but I didn't have time to move; that's not a luxury I had at that point. I had to do what I had to do with what I had available at that moment.

There is always much debate about the value of kyusho-jitsu in 'real' situations, and many corroborated instances of people even failing to be affected by certain kyusho strikes during demonstrations. What is your response to this, and can you relay any instances where this has happened to you, and explain how you handled it?

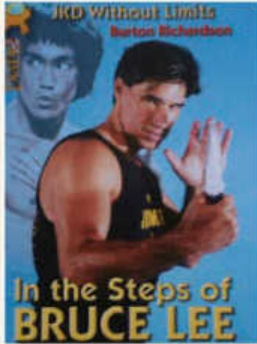
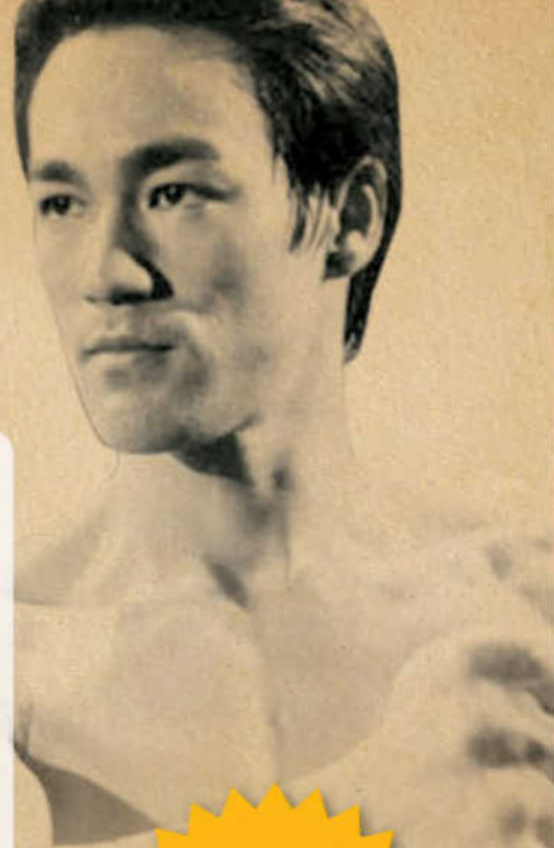
In real situations, the times I have used it, I've put the person down. The difference between a real situation and a demonstration is everybody at times fails during a demonstration, because you don't want to hurt the person. There is a different attitude and you're in a different state of mind. It's not survival in a demonstration; it's for show.

I've hit people before. I was in the Czech Republic a couple of weeks ago, teaching. A student said, "I want you to knock me out," and I asked, "Why? I'm here to teach and not just beat on you." He said all these guys knocked him out and he'd like to feel how I do it. I hit him once or twice, he goes "No, no," and finally I said, "Screw it," and I put him on his ass.

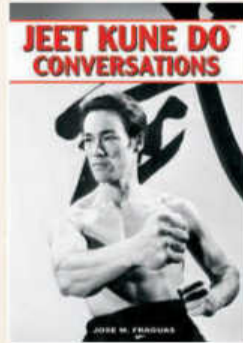
There are some people that you can just flick with your finger and they'll pass out, they're that easy; maybe because they believe wholeheartedly or it's just the way their system is set up. There are some people that you have to do it for real.

Once, a Chinese man, he was an acupuncturist, said pressure points are baby steps, they are the beginning. You need to be able to hurt or heal whatever you touch through intent and if you're going to hurt somebody, that intent has to be incredibly strong. That's what I did; I said I had no value for this [attacker's] life at this moment. You turn it on, you turn it off and then it's time for

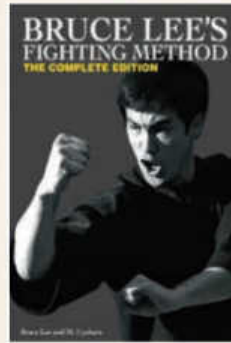
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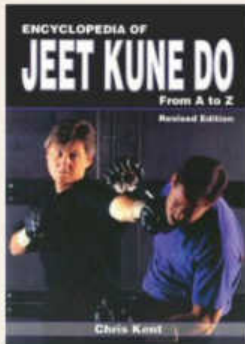
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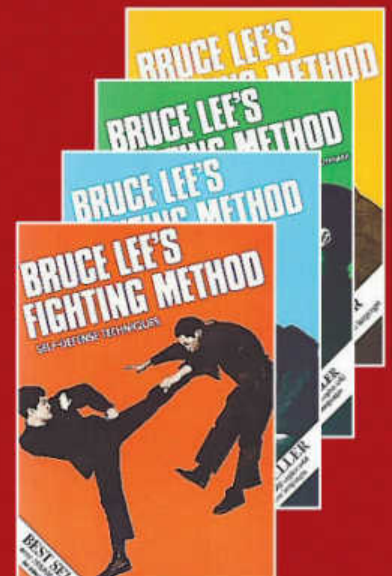


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Kline demonstrating pressure-point attacks that flow from the often misunderstood but widely practised 'X block' (inset)

a beer. I didn't want to do it, to tell you the truth; it takes a lot of out of me, too. In a real situation it's not fun, you have all this adrenaline going.

What do you think of those masters out there propagating the notion that you can manipulate opponents' 'chi' without even touching them, and staging demonstrations in which they knock over their willing 'followers' from metres away? Do these guys make it harder to win people over to kyusho concepts?

I was going out to teach in Oregon a couple of years ago. One guy said he used to train with Dillman; he said I was just going to knock people out [so he didn't come]. At the end of the seminar, on the way home, the seminar organiser called that guy. He said, "You missed a really great seminar." The guy asked how many people I knocked out. I didn't knock anybody out, [the organiser] said, but I taught them a ton of stuff. He gave me a really good testimonial. He goes, "I don't know what it was about when you came out here and taught this class, but I know my techniques are working better." Part of what we talked about was the intent; for example, you can't half try skydiving — you either jump out of the plane or you take a plane ride.

I've heard it said by other highly trained Kyusho International members that there are really only a handful of kyusho strikes or points that can be used with reliability in live combat (as opposed to, say, when you have a willing demonstration partner, or have already brought an

attacker into a controlled position). Is that your experience and, if so, which ones are your bread-and-butter strikes?

You can shoot somebody and they don't fall down. Even if you hit them in the centre and you miss the heart by a millimetre, they may not fall down depending on their height, weight, if they're on adrenaline, or on any drugs, etc. There is nothing that is 100 per cent. I have certain techniques that I like. I don't have one particular thing because each situation is different, but I have a certain concept or something that I follow. If a guy is taller than me, I am probably going to kick him on points on the leg to get him to bend because I understand how the body works and what reactions certain points will give me, then I'll go after the head and turn the lights off. If he puts his hands on me, I'll try small-joint manipulation [or] I'll go after his head. If it's a real situation, I am going to try to take his head out as quickly as possible. It doesn't mean I am going to kill him — I don't want to go to jail. But I am going to do what I have to do so I can walk away from that situation. I may have to deal with some of the consequences afterwards, unfortunately, but that's life.

Having practised eskrima/arnis, do you also apply kyusho within that, and, if so, what aspects of practising an art like kyusho-jitsu with weapons differ from practising without a weapon? Does it generally mean that if you use a martial art weapon, more damage or accuracy can be achieved than just with hands-on pressure-point attacks?

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Master Mark Kline
8th Degree Black Belt



Kline demonstrating combinations used to attack nerve points on the outside (above) and inside (right) of the legs



To me it's all the same — weapon or no weapon, I am going to do the exact same thing. If I have a knife, I can cut; if I don't, I can't cut, but I can use the same motions to attack the points. For example, if someone is just throwing a hook punch at you, a lot of people may take their time. When someone is swinging their weapon around you, you move your ass because they have a weapon in their hand. If somebody takes a stick in their right hand and reaches back to swing or they put their hand back to punch, the motion is the thing. What eskrima taught me is to know when an attack is coming at you so that you know where to look at what angle. That helps reading the body. It told me what angles are available at those situations. It's getting easier and easier, as there are only so many ways someone can move.

With that in mind, what is the key to successfully adding pressure-point techniques into your martial art?

If you have bad technique to begin with, adding the pressure points into it is not going to help you. You need to have a good, sound foundation and good, sound fundamentals, then you layer this in and it just makes what you're doing that much more effective.

Is there a particular way you structure your teaching to enable martial artists to integrate the kyusho concepts and techniques into their arsenals?

I have an international organisation called the Kyusho Institute. I have students from all over the world studying my method, which is called the PinPoint Method, just through online. Some of the people I have trained with are psychologists, psychiatrists and educational specialists who teach people how to learn faster so that they can spend less time learning and more time perfecting. When I was teaching in Italy last week, there was a woman at one of the classes who was very lost. Someone else was teaching at that point, but I stepped in and broke the

“THAT’S HOW WE ARE GOING TO ATTRACT MORE PEOPLE TO MARTIAL ARTS — MAKING IT MORE ABOUT THE STUDENTS.”

class and techniques down into smaller pieces. I kept telling people, you're going to see at the end of the class why we are doing it this way, and at the end of the class I brought her up and asked her to show me what we did at the beginning. I got her through the entire technique and she was like, wow!; we changed the whole experience for her by making it about her and showing her she can learn it and it is very easy. But you have to slow down first — I said, I am going to help you do that. She has since joined my online program just because of that class, because I think what we did was change her whole experience. There are so many instructors out there

that want to get up there and show you what they know, but they forget that people aren't there to watch you show what you know. They are there to see what you will show them how to do. Students are coming in so they can learn, not to watch you perform. Most teachers just watch and stand up like it's their first performance time. It's not about the instructor; it's about the student. Instructors need to get that through their heads. That's how we are going to attract more people to martial arts — making it more about the students, because, after all, they're the ones who are coming to learn. ■

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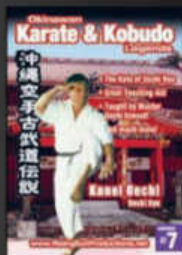
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FIGHT LIFE WITH TOM GOLDSWORTHY



Man with the Golden Sticks

Tom Goldsworthy began martial arts in the 1980s and served in the security business simultaneously. A founder of Zen Goshu Goshin Jutsu, Goldsworthy is also a world champion and Black-belt in Cacoy Doce Pares eskrima, one of the Philippines' best-known weapon-based fighting arts. A member of Townsville's Oceanic Martial Arts Academy, Goldsworthy uses his passion of the arts by helping deaf and mute individuals practise and compete in martial arts.

INTERVIEW BY STEVEN TALEVSKI

Tom, can you tell us when and how you first got involved with martial arts?

I started when I was 18 years old at university in Townsville, where I joined the karate club.

You began working security on the doors of nightclubs in the 1980s. Did you regularly use your martial arts in that setting?

I had about 20 years of security experience in front of nightclubs. The reason why I focused so hard on martial arts is because I could see the application of its techniques.

Your journey in martial arts has taken you to Doce Pares eskrima. How and why did you get onto that path?

It's probably the people you meet along the journey like the instructors, and getting to watch what they're doing. I remember watching Grandmaster Glenn Gardiner working [sticks] on bags; I thought, I have to learn to defend against that and how to beat that. That's what dragged me into eskrima.

What sets eskrima apart from other weapon-based martial arts?

The best way I describe it is that it is the continuation of the flow. I used to describe karate as 'chess with the element of pain'. I call eskrima 'speed chess' because there is no time to think as such; it is more a reactionary type

of thing. When I enter a fight, it's relaxed and I just react to what happens in the fight. I don't think about techniques as such. When I'm training, of course, I have some techniques and good form. When I'm fighting, though, I just let instinct take more control.

You are one of the three founders of Zen Goshu Goshin Jutsu. How did you form that martial art, and what is some of its background?

It's a club with a fair percentage of military members. It was a club with quite a long attachment to the military, but I was non-military as a university student. The club was formed on the basis of real-life self-defence techniques. We competed in tournaments with set rules, but in class everything we taught was from a self-defence position at all times. The big thing was we always combined whatever we found. We'd go out and absorb something if we found it to be new. I travelled once in the late '80s and found the style of muay Thai roundhouse kicks, and I absorbed that and took it back to the club. We reach out to like-minded people, see what they're doing and then bring in it and incorporate it.

How did you and the other founders try to differentiate it from other martial arts?

"When I'm training of course, I have some techniques and good form. When I'm fighting, though, I just let instinct take more control."



The Coach's Tips

Goldsworthy on adjusting training for individual needs:

It's essential. In our style, all our Black-belts do exactly the same, but they all fight differently. One of our problems with our style is to allow people to put their own character, their own strength and weakness — including mental strengths and weaknesses — into their fighting abilities. So it's a matter of letting someone grow through it; giving the fighter everything but letting them decide which parts to take and use. We then look for those parts that work: when you see something positive, increase it; when you see something negative, talk and analyse it with them. See for whatever reason they're using it to work for them, but if it's not working then let them know. At a certain stage, it's about allowing the fighter to tell you as a coach what he wants.

On how to approach learning multiple martial arts:

I think there is no difference [between arts]. We were amazed when we trained with Charlie Smith; he took the Australian Olympic team to Barcelona. He showed me a hook [punch] and he had his hand turned over similar to karate, and I said to him, "That's how we do it in karate." He said, "Nah, that's a boxing technique..." and I said it was a karate technique. The most important thing is that the body is made to work effectively in one way. The similarities in kung fu, karate, boxing, judo and jiu-jitsu are not surprising to me, because the body is a mechanism that can work most effectively one way because the body is designed in one way. The brain can make the variance, but the body only moves one way.

All of our backgrounds were in security and military, so basically we wanted to bring it back to its bare bones — I think in the early '90s when karate got a little bit flowery and people were looking for a big answer. There is no big answer; there is consistency, hard work and self-defence — it's the same concept in my mind. There is nothing flowery about how to win a big fight. It's basic and simple: there are two or three good techniques and the fight is over. At one stage in the past it became really like 'you do this, do this, do this' and it got out of hand. From real-life experiences, it's two or three blows and the fight is over.

You're involved with the Bali Sports Foundation. What are the foundation's goals and what is your role?

The Bali Sports Foundation was formed by a group in Bali, Indonesia. It was set up by Rodney Holt, who is the director of the group. I went and visited it through

the Goshin and karate side a couple of years ago. It's an organisation based around sports for the disabled, which is a big thing in Bali because of the Hindu religion — the disabled aren't given as much help as they would get in Australia, because they say they're living in the next life and paying for their past sins. What the organisation has done with sport is that they've created blind judo and deaf eskrima — that's the group I've been involved with. It's amazing to see the empowerment of it. When I first went, I watched people drag themselves through rocks and pull themselves into wheelchairs, which are built by the centre to play wheelchair basketball.

How did that recent journey to Bali go?

It went really well. We actually made an all-styles tournament, which was really good. We had Lightning arnis, Diamondback eskrima, Modern arnis and Cacoy Doce



Goldsworthy training on Magnetic Island, North Queensland

"Deaf and mute fighters learn all the same drills and applications as normal fighters."



Goldsworthy coaching deaf and mute athletes at the 2014 world titles

Pares, which is my style, so we had a coming together of all different styles. The ability of the people who can't read or speak was incredible to watch. There was one man called Norman, who I met in Cebu at the world championships in 2014; he won silver, which is completely unexpected in his division because it is a very highly contested division. To watch him a year later, he is so confident, he's increased his body size, he is super fit

and he is incredible to watch. He's jumped levels and levels from the confidence he got from competing.

How is it different to working with deaf/mute stick fighters compared to non-deaf fighters?

It's just people's understanding of it. A good example is when I was at the 2014 Doce Pares World Championships, I was coaching one of the fighters and I said my fighter is deaf/mute, he can't hear. The

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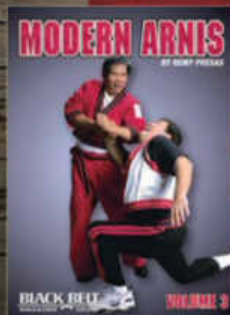
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FIGHT LIFE WITH TOM GOLDSWORTHY

Goldsworthy in full armour with his 2014 Cacoy Doce Pares World Federation Championship medals



Filipino official said, "That's okay, I'll bang harder" — so they didn't even comprehend that he couldn't hear even if they banged harder.

A lot of communication is done by sign language. A lot of it is not when you speak to them, but they pick up what you show them instantly. If you show them something, they'll follow your motion if you do it slow enough. Their ability to coordinate things

What sort of methods and systems in training do you teach to deaf/mute fighters?

They learn all the same drills and applications as normal fighters. The big thing about the Bali Sports Foundation is making it normal, so that their disabilities are shown not to be disabilities. They learn all the same drills as everyone else. The only difference is

"Stick fighting is a very demanding sport. It's only a one-minute round but I've found athletes in the armour that couldn't last more than 30 seconds because of the weight of the armour and the speed of what you're trying to do."

is incredible. The same is their ability to move their speed instantly. You're not even saying words between rounds, you're just staring at them and giving them the strength to go on. Stick fighting is a very demanding sport. It's only a one-minute round but I've found athletes in the armour that couldn't last more than 30 seconds because of the weight of the armour and the speed of what you're trying to do.

that we'll throw something in the ring when they need to stop and when you need to stop them, you need to get yourself in between them in a fight, you can't just call out. So the referees have to be on the ball to get in there and split them apart. The other bit is that when you're explaining a foul or a penalty or a point deduction, you have to use hand gestures. If there is a big issue, their corner will express what they need. ■



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Aussie a Hit in Home of Muay Thai

After an excellent year plying his trade in Thailand, up-and-coming Aussie muay Thai fighter Kurtis Staiti has come agonisingly close to closing out 2015 in top spot at Max Muaythai.

REPORT BY ZACH BROADHURST

Kurtis Staiti shone again at Max Muaythai on 6 December in the final four-man, 62-kilo tournament of the year, battling it out for the gold belt and a one million baht cash prize.

Staiti had already won a lot of new fans when he won the Silver-belt tournament and earned his place in the final against the other three Silver-belt winners.

In the opening fight, Staiti faced tough Russian fighter Timor Sasiprapa, who many had as one of the favourites to win. The fight had barely started, though, when Staiti landed a hard, straight punch to the body, dropping Timor for the count.

In the final, the Aussie faced a very experienced Thai, Kengsiam Nor Sripung, who also came into the final fresh after winning his semifinal by stoppage early in the second round. The opening round looked even with both sizing each other up, then Staiti had a very strong second round, where he looked like he was wearing down the Thai with strong knee attacks. In the third round, Kengsiam came back and caught Staiti with some sharp kicks as the Aussie rushed in a little, but at the bell it looked like Staiti had done enough to seal the win.

The judges scored it a draw, meaning they had to fight one more deciding round. Staiti kept pushing forward, but the effects of the earlier rounds appeared to have caught up with him a little as he slowed up and Kengsiam managed to outscore Staiti with several sharp kicks to edge out the round and take the title.



Kurtis Staiti battles Kengsiam Nor Sripung in the final of the four-man Max Muaythai tournament

Coming off a highlight-reel finish of Peter Sobotta at UFC 193, Australia's own **Kyle Noke** has failed to continue his career revival inside the UFC, going down to promotional newcomer Alex Morono via split decision at UFC 195.

Originally scheduled to face a tough opponent in former *The Ultimate Fighter* winner Kelvin Gastelum, Noke went into the bout with Morono as a heavy favourite after the young American replaced Gastelum on just 11 days' notice.

After getting his nose broken early in the fight, Noke struggled to stamp his authority on his younger and less experienced opponent,



Staiti came a close second to the experienced Thai local



Kyle Noke delivers the kick that de-livered — and KO'd — Peter Sobotta at UFC 193



David Meak (L) and Christian Lee trade blows at One FC



X-treme Combat champion Alex Volkanovski



Reece McLaren gets excited about his near-finish in One FC

and came very close to being submitted by arm-bar late in the third round.

The result was tough to call, with one judge even seeing all three rounds in Noke's favour, but the other two declaring it 29–28 for Morono to give him the split-decision victory.

Australia's **Reece McLaren** caused a massive upset in the Philippines as One Championship hosted its recent show, *One: Spirit of Champions*. McLaren took the fight on a week's notice to replace fellow Aussie Jordan Lucas, who was forced out of the bout due to a cut. McLaren was the underdog against hometown favourite Mark Striegl.

Striegl tried to make the most of his size advantage in the first round, going for multiple takedown attempts, with McLaren scrambling each time. In the second round, McLaren delivered some nice leg kicks, which visibly bruised

his opponent's legs, but was dropped with a counter elbow and copped a soccer kick to the head while on the canvas; however, McLaren managed to recover and finished the round strongly.

The third round was all McLaren as he managed to get a guillotine choke while stuffing another takedown attempt, but Striegl got out of the dangerous position. He then found himself eating elbows from the young Aussie as McLaren displayed some nasty ground-and-pound before switching to a rear-naked choke and finishing the fight with just under 90 seconds remaining.

Also on the card was fellow Aussie David Meak, who endured a tough loss to Christian Lee with a KO just 29 seconds into the first round.

Alex Volkanovski has added another belt to his growing collection, this time claiming the Pacific X-treme

Combat featherweight title, submitting former champion Yusuke Yachi via triangle choke during the co-main event of PXC 50.

It was also a good night for a pair of talented New Zealanders — who have both previously fought on Australian soil — Kaiwhare Kara-France and Mark Abelardo.

Kara-France put in a dominant performance against Josh Duenas and finished the fight via TKO in the first round. Duenas also walked away with a TKO victory, defeating Roman Alvarez in the second round of their bout.

John Wayne Parr has continued his busy finish to 2015, fighting in the main event of his own promotion, *Caged Muay Thai*, for its seventh installment.

Originally scheduled to battle American Cyrus Washington, who had to withdraw last-minute due to visa issues,

Parr took on Ireland's Mark Casserly and secured a third-round knockout victory after a dominant performance.

The win was a great comeback for Parr, who suffered a unanimous-decision loss to Cosmo Alexandre at *Lion Fight 25* just over a month earlier in America.

Plans have already begun for CMT 8, with Parr and his wife Angie looking to bring Dutch superstar Jorina Baars to fight in Australia early in 2016. ■



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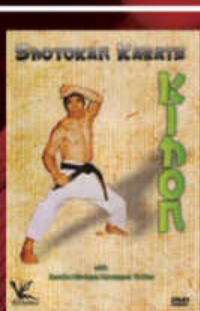
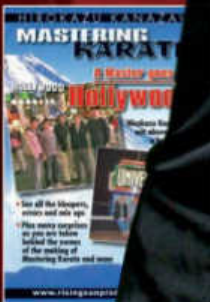
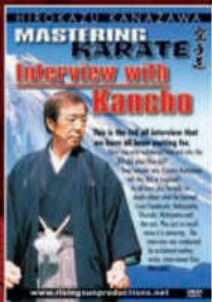
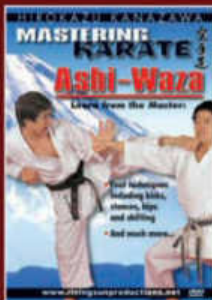


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The Massage from Hell

John Gill never thought he'd be held hostage at a Chinese medicine clinic in Shanghai. The 6th Dan hapkido and taekwondo Black-belt and current 12-time world self-defence champion was attacked following a massage and held by a group of Chinese thugs — but with 35 years of martial arts experience, Gill turned to what he knew best. In this new segment on real self-defence scenarios, Gill tells *Blitz* how he handled it.

INTERVIEW BY STEVEN TALEVSKI

Last October, I was in Shanghai, China, for a work conference. One Sunday I was walking down the street near my hotel when I was stopped by a man who asked if I wanted a foot massage. I thought it was a good idea, as my feet were sore from walking around a lot. It looked professional as we walked into the clinic; I would've had second thoughts if she'd taken me down a back alley.

I went in and they took me upstairs where there was a seat. He brought in all the stuff for the massage as I took my thongs off. I also decided to have a back massage and after it had finished, he walked out, and I started putting my shirt back on. I thought I was safe until I heard a whack on the door.

Seconds later I got a whack on my neck and this guy got me in a choke hold. I automatically reacted to that because of my hapkido training: I elbowed him and threw him off me, but as I turned, the other four guys just absolutely clamped me. With no space to move around and evade them, I had no chance. All five men were on me, one grabbing me around my neck and the others around my arms. Every time I tried to move forward, one guy would punch me in the ribs and another in the back of the biceps, so I had bruises all over.

I needed to get up and get loose. I thought I was in trouble because nobody knew I was there — my daughter is my travel agent, so she knew



Gill demonstrating hapkido self-defence concepts at the International Martial Arts Council USA World Championships

where the hotel was, but that was it.

They kept saying things like, "This is China, not Australia," and that they were bigger than the Triads. Initially I was quite panicked, thinking they could just kill me and dump my body. I knew it was a robbery and when I was being choked I pointed my hand towards my wallet in my pants. I kept saying, "You can have my money."

As they continued to threaten me, they got all my money out of my wallet and dumped it on the table. They saw my cards and I had mixed up the pin number I gave them because I had more than one bank card. They said, "You better

say the right one or we will kill you." I then said, "You can have whatever is on there, but I don't think there is anything on that card and I have about 2000 Yuan (\$447) in cash." He went to their ATM at a restaurant and came back, saying I was telling the truth and that he couldn't get any money. They told me I was lucky.

Then they saw one of my martial art business cards, which had 'instructor' marked on it. He goes, "You're a master..." and I replied, "It isn't doing me any good now!" I started laughing and smiling a lot, as I thought I would change it around and try talking to befriend them.

Suddenly the conversation started to change; it was like they started respecting me a little bit more, like I was a kung fu master. They started letting go of me — the guy who had me in a choke hold loosened up and the other guy took his arms off mine, and suddenly I was loose.

The conversation turned to Jackie Chan, and they reacted in appraisal — so Jackie Chan's got to find out because he actually helped me! I said I was John and shook all their hands, smiling at them. I was thinking, this is ridiculous — they could have done this in three minutes! The longer they hold you, I thought, they are

REALITY CHECK WITH JOHN GILL

scaring you so you won't go to the police — but that actually made me angrier.

I faked that I needed to go to the toilet and they laughed, saying, "Don't do it here." One guy opened the door and the other guy nudged me up the stairs. I was smiling and saying thanks. The next thing you know, I smashed this guy with a left backfist and side-kicked another guy on the right. Then I moved into a front kick back to the other guy as he moved in. As the others started coming in, I started to throw what felt like a million punches and ran at the same time. I ran out screaming and punching guys. I was so angry, there could've been 30 of them and I feel like I would've got through. As I got out, I ran down the street yelling "Police!" This lady came up and said she was the police. I looked at her and thought, you're not dressed as one. So I kept going until I saw a police van. About five minutes later, the lady came

running towards me with my wallet in her hand and cash and other things in her other hand. I couldn't believe it! She told me I must go now.

I rang my driver, Lee, to get here and passed the phone to a Chinese guy to explain exactly where I was. Lee rolled up and I asked him to call the police, and they came. We met with more police at the front of the massage parlour. A man ran out claiming to be the manager and apologising. He pulled out the 2000 yuan (\$447), which had been missing and gave it to me.

I got to my conference later on and I told people what had happened. I met up with a couple from the Gold Coast with a guy who had 20 years of martial arts training. They went for a massage next to their hotel and they were just bailed up for extra money as they left, so they managed just to escape with a bit of push-and-shove. I found out another guy from Melbourne

"As the others started coming in, I started to throw what felt like a million punches and ran at the same time..."



Gill with his 2015 world self-defence trophies

got held up by three guys, but they didn't hold him down. He got nailed for about 12 990 Yuan (\$2905). I went to the embassy with Cameron. We saw the consulate, they wrote all the reports and they were happy with me getting the money. Fifteen minutes later, a guy turns up — probably the manager — with the money and asks him how much money he wants. He says, "All of it, 12 990 Yuan," so the guy puts the money on the table and the police put it through a counter. We asked if they were going to charge him and they said no, "because you got your money back." In Australia they would've been locked up — but apparently they said



The massage clinic at 510 Nanjing Rd East where Gill's ordeal took place

Anthony Mitchell's Story

Anthony Mitchell was in Shanghai with his wife at the same conference as John Gill. A Black-belt in taekwondo, Green-belt in jujitsu and trainer at Rings MMA Club in Toowoomba, Queensland, Mitchell was a victim of a similar scam on the same trip.

Having arrived in Shanghai a few days before the conference, Mitchell and his wife decided to go get a massage at a 'fancy' parlour across the road from their hotel. The couple were well aware of scams after reading one of the Lonely Planet's books on China.

After agreeing to a price for the massage with a worker, Mitchell and his wife crossed the road to their room for a shower before they returned for their massage. On return they were met by the lady

with a calculator, explaining that the price had risen. After a back-and-forth conversation, the couple finally got their massage.

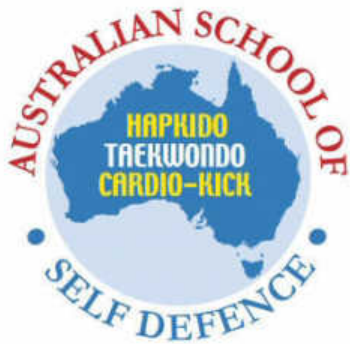
Once they went downstairs in the parlour, the massage ladies demanded more money. With unknown men sitting in the lounge, Mitchell began to worry. As it got heated, with Mitchell's partner involved, the two men got up and began an aggressive exchange with them. Mitchell knew they were in a dangerous situation, so after more commotion, he put his palms up in a forward defence and threw the original amount of money at the others. With his back to the exit, Mitchell stepped in front of his wife and gradually moved to the door, then they got out as quickly as they could.

to Cameron, "We own the police." It was ridiculous, the whole thing was like a movie.

Basically, my emotions went from shock to anger, and I'm still angry. But martial arts helped me in two ways: firstly, they found out I was a master and they showed me more respect; secondly, they loosened me up and I used my hapkido techniques to fight my way out.

The lesson is that we can't really trust anybody, especially when travelling. You should always contact *smartraveller.gov.au* before you go overseas.

You can find out more information about Chinese scams on John Gill's new website www.scamsafe.com.au and also at the government travel site smartraveller.gov.au



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Toxic Titles

Rank and title is still a big deal in martial arts — or at least, martial arts marketing — but is it really an accurate measure of instructors' skills and worth?

Titles and ranks are, to many of us, one of the intrinsically attractive aspects of the martial arts. They embody respect, tradition, integrity, exoticism, celestial knowledge and Eastern mysticism. So, we have senseis to the left of us, sifus to the right of us, sabumnims to the front of us and masters all around us.

These titles add credibility and status to a school, a defined authority for beginners and reward for achievement to the dedicated.

In the ideal world, I am sure, all of these factors would co-exist with instructors of warmth, intelligence and integrity.

Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world.

When I began my martial arts journey, the choice was simple: judo at the scout hall or boxing at the police boys' club. We called the instructors by their first names and they treated us as equals. Equals without their level of knowledge or expertise, but equals nevertheless. Outside the club, in the manner of the age, all adults were 'Mr' or 'Mrs', but these social divisions disappeared on entering the gym. Titles were unknown.

The result was that we treasured our place in the organisation and respected our instructors with an intense and lasting loyalty and affection.

People who didn't show respect never made it to instructor positions because they didn't fit in and faded away. Senior students were generally kind, supporting and nurturing to their juniors.

When I went to university

I lived in a residential college where the 'fresher' system was in full fling. Dominated by ex-boarding school students who brought their dysfunctional, incestuous boarding school customs with them, the first-year students (freshers) were treated as inferiors. They were obliged to address the seniors as 'Mr' or 'Sir' and they were subjected to debasing and demeaning abuse, humiliation and rituals. In spite of the fact that they paid the same board as the seniors, they were forced to perform many of the menial duties around the college.

The explanation, as propagated endlessly by the seniors, was that it was necessary to instil 'college spirit' into the freshers. As far as I could see, it was just an excuse for one group to bully those less powerful than themselves. All the talk about team spirit and respect for the tradition of the college was nonsense.

When they tried it on me, I flattened a couple of them (thanks to judo) and they decided that the 'college spirit' could exist quite well without me partaking. They left me alone, pretending not to notice when I addressed them by their first names.

I passed the first year listening to the victims of the system, the other freshers, grumbling and complaining about the injustice. Can you imagine my surprise, therefore, when the first thing they all did, on returning for the beginning of second year, was to head up into the freshers' corridor and continue the cycle, relishing their turn to indulge in the



Has ranking in martial arts been taken too far?

ISTOCK

gentle art of fresher-bashing?

One of the features of dysfunctional social systems is that victims, when given the chance, turn into tyrants.

As the '60s passed, more and more martial arts appeared on the scene.

I earned my way at university by working as a bouncer — an employment I kept up until the early 2000s.

I couldn't help but notice that, while judo and boxing were very handy in a fight, most of the newer martial arts looked and sounded flash but in a real fight rewarded their practitioners with black eyes and broken noses. I also couldn't help but notice that the more useless martial arts were in a fight, the more visible was the importance of titles in their schools.

Bitter experience showed me that while there were some instructors of integrity who enforced titles in their schools,

there were far too many who were corrupted by the false pride such titles foster.

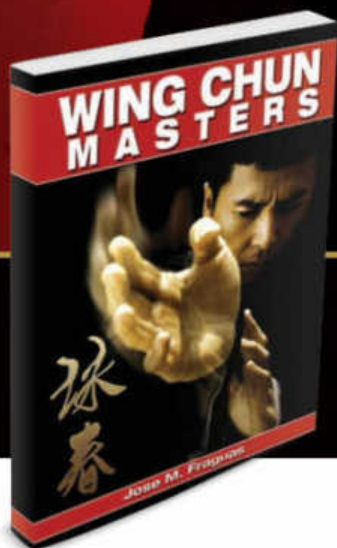
I have seen many schools and clubs in which the instructors sleaze on the female students, misappropriate money and force their students to do everything except paint their houses. These are virtually always schools that strictly enforce titles. And this flows on through the system, with the senior students treating their juniors with off-handed contempt while demanding their deference.

As Abraham Lincoln stated, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Respect for the customs and traditions of a martial art come naturally to the students of a well-run organisation, so titles are not necessary. The use of titles is an unnecessary cancer — we don't need them anymore and can't afford them. ■

Dr John Jory is a registered medical practitioner and sports psychologist with 55 years' experience in martial arts. He has a 5th Dan in hapkido under GM Sung Soo Lee, a 2nd Dan in judo with the IJF and is the founder of Rolling Thunder Martial Art.

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GET TACTICAL WITH GRAHAM KUERSCHNER



Is Your System Honest?

As much as we say competitive fighting is far removed from the realities of the street, full-contact fight sports have a relevance that is hard to deny.

This is the final article in a four-part series about the relationship between the field of self-defence and that of MMA. I use the UFC as the specific comparison point because of its likely familiarity to most readers. There are other notable MMA alternatives such as PRIDE and the Russian originated TFC (Team Fighting Championships) to talk about, but that's for another time.

Now, someone in my field of defensive tactics — and I don't remember who — once stated that MMA was the worst thing to happen to the teaching of self-defence. An exaggeration, of course, but like the Bruce Lee movies of old, the concern was that it would lead to misunderstanding about what we do. So rather than lessons in this last article, I'll focus on some misconceptions deriving from MMA as I am experiencing them.

Misconception #1: Self-defence equals fight. I've written about this several times previously. It's the notion, mainly applying to young males, that learning to defend yourself means learning to fight. Fighting here means to willingly engage with another male with the aim of physically dominating them, if not just plain beating them up, for reasons that have more to do with male pride than self-defence. I get young males who, after seeing the UFC, want to train like that in the belief that it will help them defend themselves. And, equally, I get parents who are concerned that we will teach their kids exactly that.

Misconception #2: Closed-fist (knuckle) striking is your



Aussie Dan Kelly (L) knows the honesty of judo transfers well to the UFC

best striking weapon. Not in self-defence. Again, I've written about this before. High probability of injury to your own (unpadded) hands, or transfer of body fluids if there is a skin break don't look good on camera, so it can complicate a plea of self-defence and cause legal problems for you if your victim suffers complications from their head striking the ground. Above all else, punching someone in the face doesn't present well if used in the work context; police officer, security guard, ambulance officer, healthcare worker, etc.

Misconception #3: 'Winning' means to physically dominate your attacker. In MMA and combat sports, yes; in self-defence, no. Firstly, there is no 'winning' in self-defence. It demeans the seriousness of the situation and the consequences that could follow. If I'm forced to use that term, then winning in self-defence is defined as successfully doing the smartest thing for you, given who you are and the situation you find yourself in. That could be running away. In extreme circumstances, that could be

killing the other person. It most likely is something in between those two extremes, with the default response being to exit the scene as quickly and safely as possible while minimising the likelihood of follow-up consequences.

Misconception #4: My skills in MMA (or whatever combat sport) will transfer to the street because I can simply adjust my technique to suit. Not really. What you are saying is that you are going to override your trained automatic responses with conscious thought in the middle of an altercation. Some techniques will transfer, but many won't.

Misconception #5: I want to be a tough MMA fighter who will deter others and get respect. The physical and mental toughness, the athletic prowess and skill of UFC fighters has an understandable appeal to the young. But what these young ones see is what they perceive

as lacking in themselves. They just don't understand that looking and acting tough is a road to trouble.

Outside the UFC, in movies and TV shows, we are treated to the laughable stereotype of MMA fighters as gnarly and heavily tattooed, as if all MMA fighters are knuckle-draggers. Yes, some UFC fighters are gnarly and heavily tattooed; others are university educated, well dressed and well spoken. Look at the younger generation of UFC fighters coming up, Rory McDonald being a case in point. Look at how he dresses, look at how he talks, and then look at how he fights.

Having said all that, the curious thing is that I spend almost as much time defending MMA from the uninformed and self-defence instructors who think it is just a blood sport. The huge advantage MMA and all the sports combat disciplines have over self-defence systems is that it's much harder to push nonsense. As they say, there is nowhere to hide on the mat. Your technique works or it doesn't. Your system or approach to training is valid or it's not. Three-quarters of self-defence systems don't hit the mark, in my opinion. Three-quarters of so-called self-defence instructors shouldn't be claiming to teach real self-protection skills.

MMA may be more confronting, but it is also more honest. ■

Graham Kuerschner is a 50-year veteran of the martial arts and an instructor in seven systems. He has competed at state and national level in judo, kickboxing and eskrima, and is a former director of Krav Maga Australia and New Zealand. He can be contacted through his website at www.sdtactics.com.au



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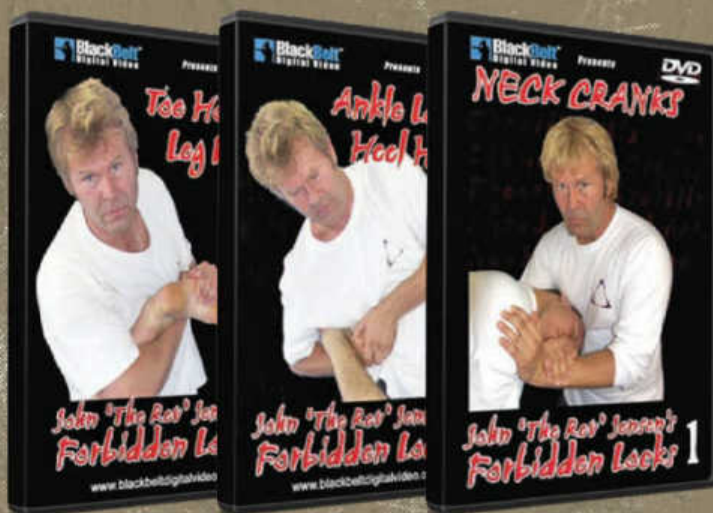
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CLOSE QUARTERS WITH PAUL CALE



What's Old is New

The old becomes the new, the ordinary becomes the extraordinary and what once was ridiculed becomes mainstream. That's martial arts, and life.

Today MMA seems to be the ultimate proving ground for the validity of a particular martial art or, at the very least, for a particular technique unique to that art. Just recently I watched footage of Conor McGregor doing knee-walking on a beach. The title of the video post was 'UFC Champion Conor McGregor doing aikido'. Well, you would have seen Conor McGregor doing taekwondo kicks as well; in fact, there is not too much that Conor has not tried during training.

It wasn't that long ago that there was no real interest in judo for MMA, then along came Ronda Rousey and the masses jumped on judo. My point is that if you want the edge over your opponents and are taking on a training method purely as a result of it being the latest fad, then you are too late.

Imagine seeing somebody in training doing knee-walking as part of their warm-up and you ask them why they are doing that exercise. They answer, "Because Conor McGregor does it." My follow-up question to that would be to ask, "Why does Conor McGregor do it?" You may then find yourself on the end of a blank look. Don't get me wrong, I am all for diverse training methods and for learning about body movement in as many ways possible, but you need to know the reason behind what you are doing. This is the key to seeing other ways that you may achieve variation or better results. Let's take knee-walking as an example: my BJJ class has been doing knee-walking forward and backwards for well

over a year now, as well as other movement patterns that are not typically associated with BJJ warm-ups. Why? Well, not because such-and-such does it; instead, let me give you the reason behind the practice, then you will be able to make your own informed decision as to why you would or wouldn't try it.

When I look at BJJ movement drills, the most common thing I see is the hip escape. Like in all martial arts, hip movement is imperative, but unlike most martial arts, the BJJ exponent needs to be able to move their hips when on their back — and often when somebody else is on top of them. The classic hip escape is a perfect way to achieve this; however, it is not the only way. In understanding what the objective of the hip escape is, we can then complement this movement with others that help us achieve the same outcome, so as to give us a better understanding of body movement and a greater array of options in a competitive environment. I can then look to similar sports such as judo for variations on the hip escape theme.

BJJ players are not only moving off their backs or from their feet; they are often on their knees. Being in the guard or from attacking with the double-leg takedown can often have you working from your knees. So, to me, it made sense to introduce movement exercises for when working from the knees. Just as I leant on my judo background, I now looked to my aikido experience for exercises that

UFC champ Conor McGregor working from his knees against Max Holloway



JARED WICKERHAW/GETTY IMAGES

would support opening the hips and moving from the kneeling position. Again, hip movement is the key to success, so being able to effectively and rapidly move your hips from a standing, kneeling or lying position makes a lot of sense.

Conor McGregor, regardless of what you think of his persona, is a great example of what the term Mixed Martial Arts truly means. The days of one-thing-fits-all has long gone in combat sports — in fact, I don't think it was ever really there to begin with. Look at the histories of the 'traditional' arts most commonly practised today and you will see that all are forms of MMA: judo, aikido, karate and even

the old koryu (classical Japanese combat systems) have adopted techniques and blended methods from opposing traditions.

We adapt to change, and the way we train should adapt with us. We learn from the old and challenge with the new, and as long as the core of what we do gives us a functional methodology to work with, we can explore our limits with confidence. The basics, the fundamentals of whatever it is we do, are not in place to hold us back or to fix us in a moment of time — on the contrary, they lay the foundation on which you, the architect of your future, can design and build your personal method. ■

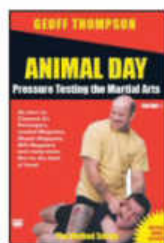
Sgt (retired) Paul Cale has fought in Afghanistan and until mid-2013 managed the Integrated Combat Centre at 2nd Commando Regiment, where he was in charge of developing CQC for Australian special forces. He now leads the combat sports program at the Australian Institute of Sport and runs Cale Integrated Combat (www.facebook.com/caleintegratedcombat)

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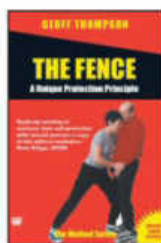
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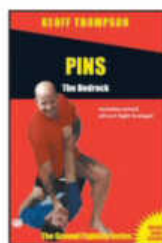
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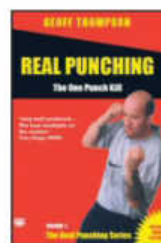
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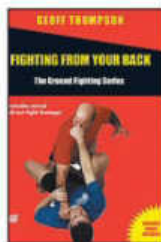
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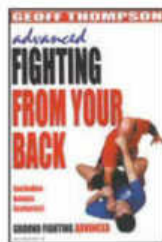
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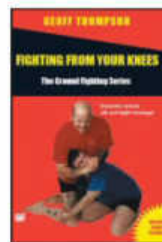
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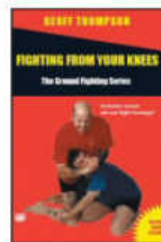
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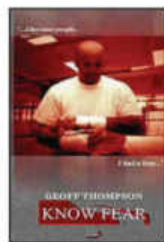
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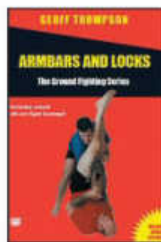
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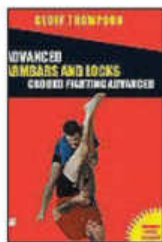
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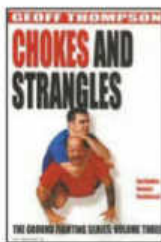
Thompson's methods of mastering fear revealed in this documentary



How to make grappling locks work when there are no rules



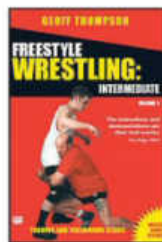
Techniques to prepare you for all-out fighting with skilled grapplers



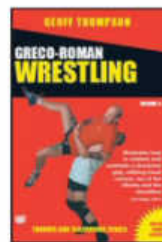
How to choke from all positions. Includes all-out fight footage



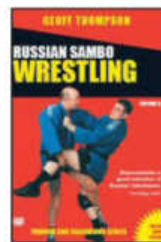
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THE LAST WORD WITH JOHN B WILL



Small Steps, Big Results

When looking for solutions in the dojo or in life, try thinking micro to go macro.

I suppose most of you have heard of the old 'monkey trap', wherein the monkey reaches into the gourd to pull out the banana but can't get his hand out without letting the banana go. The end result? He is still stuck there two or three days after first reaching in to extract his delicious treat.

What makes this so interesting to me is (as always) why it works. I'm almost certain it goes like this: the monkey is looking for a one-step solution to a two-part problem. To remove his hand, he needs to complete step one — that is, letting go of the banana — before moving on to step two — pulling his hand out. His brain seeks a one-step solution, which doesn't exist, and so he can't make his escape.

The same principle exists within the martial arts landscape. Many people are looking at a one-step solution to a multifaceted problem. When we are faced with a problem, it's very natural to seek a one-step solution to that problem; it seems that in many ways, most of us are not that much different from apes and monkeys in this regard. Most complex problems simply cannot be solved with a single-step solution. To put it another way: if we have walked into the swamp to the point where we are up to our necks in it, then it is going to require the same amount of steps to get back out again. If we allow problems to fully evolve before we begin to look for a solution, the less likely it becomes that we will find an easy, single-step solution. The only way we can

extricate ourselves from the swamp in a single step is if we have only gone in that far in the first place.

Another way I like to explain this idea is by asking students if they think they can pick up a wool sweater and rip it in half — pretty difficult. However, by finding the right thread, it may be very possible to start pulling and eventually unravel the whole thing. This idea is key to developing effective escapes in a grappling environment, for example. We should begin not by trying to blast out in one big move, but by looking for the right thread that will begin to unravel the opponent's position.

As soon as we realise that most problems require a series of steps to solve, we greatly improve our chances of finding useful and workable solutions. Defensive tactics and self-defence solutions need to be multifaceted if they are to be useful and applicable to the real world. This fact is one of the reasons why MMA is rising in popularity; it provides people with a range of skill-sets that vastly improve their chances of dealing with real-world violence. We live in a world where we need a range of skill-sets if we are to prevail and prosper. We need to be able to balance our books, work a budget, make smart financial and social decisions, utilise technology, develop good communication skills, etc. Living in today's world can be viewed as a complex problem, the solution to which requires that we tap into a number of different skill-sets, the correct blending of which will give us a better and more enjoyable life.

The key to many BJJ escapes is lots of small but important movements



CHARLIE SURIANO

For those who are interested, I'll happily tell you the 'secret to everything'. It is this: one hundred little things. What's the secret to a good business? One hundred little things. A good relationship? One hundred little things. The secret to great martial arts training? One hundred little things.

The reason why many people fail to experience

success on the training mat, or indeed in any endeavour, is because they are too often looking for the One Big Secret. My take on this is simple: if there was a single 'big secret' solution to anything — everyone would be doing it! It's almost always 100 little things. Martial arts training requires this approach, as does the living of life.

Train hard, but train smart. ■

John B Will is head of BJJ Australia and teaches Brazilian jiu-jitsu, shootfighting and self-defence solutions around the world. Check out his regular blog at www.bjj-australia.blogspot.com.au

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